

CHILDREN'S WRITING: AN EXAMINATION OF
THE WRITING PROCESS AND PRODUCTS
OF A SELECTED GROUP OF SIX-YEAR-OLD
CHILDREN AND A CASE STUDY DEMONSTRATING
THE PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT
IN ONE CHILD'S WRITING

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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EDNA PERRY OLDFORD

Children's Writing: An Examination of the
Writing Process and Products of a Selected Group
of Six-Year-Old Children and a Case Study Demonstrating
the Patterns of Development in One Child's Writing

by

Edna (Perry) Oldford, B.A.(Ed.), B.A.

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ABSTRACT

The present study sought to expand our knowledge about young children's composing processes by observing them in the classroom situation. The researcher focused on the children's behaviors while writing; the content and style of their products; and the writers' perceptions of their task.

Specifically, this investigation explored the writing processes and products of a selected group of six-year-old children from an elementary school under the Conception Bay South Integrated School Board. The six children selected for this study were identified by Marie Clay's rating scale for early writing and her "Concept About Print" Tests. Data for this study were collected from October through April 1984-85.

Throughout the data collection period, the primary emphasis was placed on gathering information from the selected six children, which provided an intensive study of the writing process. A secondary emphasis was placed on gathering data about children beyond those chosen for intense investigation. This information added depth and contributed to the overall findings. Additionally, obtaining the

information helped to reduce the observation focus on the selected six children.

The goal of the researcher was to try to understand early writing from the point of view of the child and to make effective research hypotheses and recommendations for the classroom teacher.

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DEDICATION

To the memory of
my father

Your love, kindness and warmth
live eternally to inspire
those who are left behind.

CHAPTER I
THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Having taught in the primary grades for the past eleven years and having to deal with the difficulty young children face with beginning writing, the researcher has been amazed and intrigued by breakthroughs in writing research during the past decade. Findings by researchers such as Marie Clay and Donald Graves have shed a new light on how young children are most effectively guided in their development as writers. The focus of this study was on how children change as a result of interaction with their natural environment and how children respond to specific types of instructional environments.

Research on writing has revealed that writing can begin earlier than what has traditionally been expected. Writing need not be viewed as a secondary language process, naturally following a year of reading instruction, an acquired knowledge of all the alphabet letters and the ability to spell a core of basic words. Rather, this new perspective implies that the child who has attained a degree of oral fluency can begin the writing process.

This study was an attempt to explore the writing processes and products of a selected group of six-year-old children.

and provide a detailed case study demonstrating the patterns of development in one child's attempt to write.

Statement of the Problem

In 1982 the Department of Education in Newfoundland developed a policy statement for writing instruction in the elementary grades called Language Growth. To date there is no such policy for the primary grades. Many teachers in our Province appear to have little knowledge of children's early writing other than the guidance or directions provided by the language arts guidebook provided by the Department of Education. A great deal of language activities appear on the surface to be varied and creative, but a closer examination often reveals that they reflect unfounded assumptions about language growth and development. As Harste and Burke (1980) propose, they "may in fact debilitate rather than facilitate the process of language literacy" (p. 170).

In the seventies and the early eighties language research began to focus on early writing development. King and Rentel (1979), who initiated a longitudinal study of writing, state that:

Significant clues to understanding the problems associated with learning to write may lie in the early years of schooling when most children experience the transition from their reliance on oral language to the use of written forms of language (p. 243).

They concluded that a framework is needed to focus on how children develop control over the written medium in the preschool years and in the first few years of school. Such a framework would help shed new light on how young children are most effectively guided in their development as writers. As a result of such a framework, primary teachers would gain a greater understanding of students' early writing and improve their role as facilitators and evaluators of the writing process. This study was an attempt to make a contribution to developing such a framework.

Purpose of the Study

The present study was undertaken to explore the writing processes and products of a selected group of six year old children. Through the gathering of data in a case study, an attempt was made to portray in detail the developmental process of writing. In addition, the study sought to explore children's development in terms of language organization, understanding of message and sense of directionality (King and Rentel, 1981). The major questions forming the purposes and dimensions of the investigation were:

- 1) What do children actually do when they write?
- 2) How do children write before they have much exposure to reading and have been taught formal spelling?

- 3) Does growth in children's writing follow a predictable sequence?
- 4) Can definite stages of development be identified in children's writing?
- 5) What can one learn from studying the writing process of young children?

Need for the Study

Young children just entering school are spontaneous, eager and extremely curious. They have a variety of experiences and have a way of bringing creativeness to all kinds of situations. After some years teaching in the elementary schools in our Province, this writer concludes with Herbert Kohl (1969), the author of 36 Children, that writing can be a means of releasing students to reading and other experiences in original and inventive ways. He states:

It is absurd that young people fear their own writing and are ashamed of their own voices. We have to encourage them to listen to themselves and each other, and to take the time to discover who they are for themselves. If teachers respect the voices of the young, and nurture them instead of tearing them down or trying to develop ones for students, then perhaps school will be less oppressive and alienating to the young (pp. 9-11).

In the primary classroom many such experiences and many opportunities for creative writing are needed to encourage

beginning writers to listen to themselves and others and to develop a growing pride in their own voices.

In Newfoundland as in the United States, one cannot but help notice the lack of attention paid to writing in our schools. Whiteman (1980) notes that according to surveys and reviews conducted for Donald Graves' (1978) report to the Ford Foundation:

Classroom time, public investment in education, educational research, language arts textbooks, teacher certification requirements, and teacher education courses all favor reading over writing by a large ratio. Furthermore, what writing instruction there is generally consists of workbook exercises and drills in what are thought to be "before writing skills," i.e. penmanship, vocabulary, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and standard English usage (p. 150).

Evidence for this lack of attention to writing in Newfoundland can be found in a recent study by Crocker (1983) which studied how time is allocated and used. The Institute studied 36 second grade and 39 fifth grade classrooms in 35 schools located in a variety of urban and rural settings in Eastern Newfoundland. Results of the study indicated that very little emphasis seemed to be placed on composition in these grades. In general, spelling is the area which seemed to be allocated the greatest amount of time in the elementary school language arts program.

King and Rentel (1981) at Ohio State University observed early writing development in children in an inner city and

suburban school in Columbus, Ohio. They suggested that, apart from the studies of Graves (1973, 1978, 1979), most research on student writing in school has been conducted with older children. The writer believes that efforts to understand writing are needed by the primary teacher if one is to improve the teaching of writing and lay the foundation in writing for the elementary grades. If children do not experience purposes for writing early, they may not later experience such a need.

Donald Graves, Head of the Writing Process Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire, has become an innovator in the teaching of writing and one of the leading researchers in this field. Graves (1975) recognized the need for actual observation of the behaviors of writers while they are in the process of writing. He suggested:

The case study approach in the field of comparative research is most often recommended when entering virgin territory in which little has been investigated (p. 229).

This writer agrees with Graves' (1982) suggestion that "if kids are given the chance to write they will" (p. 57). Therefore, the writer believes it is important to investigate children's early writing behaviors in order to understand how they learn the conventions of written language.

Most of the research to date describes composing processes solely from the evaluation of products that young children

create. To use Dyson's perspective, one has to hope for a holistic view of the child (Dyson, 1983, p. 23).

Graves (cited by Brandt) draws a dichotomy between the process and the product. Brandt and Graves agree that:

Real education, however, is a process - the active process of reading and writing; knowledge must be manipulated and expressed ... before a person can truly make it on his own (Brandt, 1982, p. 58).

Consequently, in order to learn about the process of writing researchers need to spend time with young children, watching them develop pieces of written text. Specifically, there is a need to explore the early writing process since little research is available on the actual behaviors evident when children write. It is to this need of providing an understanding of the writing act and making recommendations and implications for teachers that this study is addressed.

Limitations of the Study

The following are recognized as possible limitations of this study:

1. A primary concern of the researcher is the generality of the results obtained. Only six students participated in the study, and only one grade-one classroom was involved. However, as Graves (1973) concluded, when entering a new area in which little research has been done, the case study is needed and can become

a valuable tool in research. Also, since the subjects were not randomly selected, the results may not be generalizable to other groups.

2. Although data of the case-study child were not gathered until phase three in order to avoid any influence that classroom observation procedures might have on the child's writing behavior and the child's perception of the researcher's role, the researcher has recognized this was not easy to control. Observations were made of the case-study child and the remainder of the selected group in situations other than writing, to lessen the effect of the researcher's presence in the classroom. To assist the reader the following overview of the study is presented:

Chapter II reviews research directly related to the writing process. Chapter III gives the procedures used in the study. Included are details concerning the three phases of the data collection procedures used by the researcher. Evaluation criteria for the study are discussed. Chapter IV reports the findings from the study. This report provides the following data:

Phase I - The Classroom Environment;

Phase II - The Writing Process;

Phase III - The Written Products;

Phase IV - Children's Views About Writing; and

Phase V - A Case Study - Paula.

Chapter V summarizes the study and states educational and research implications.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This review examined research about the writing process with particular reference to its beginning stages in young children. Four specific areas of literature which are relevant to the present study were reviewed. Included are:

- (1) The Nature of the Child.
- (2) The Link Between Oral and Written Language.
- (3) Texts as Units of Meaning.
- (4) The Developmental Stages of Writing.
- (5) The Writing Environment.

The Nature of the Child

Piaget (1959) has posed a 'developmental stage' theory of cognitive development which was based on the results obtained from presenting children of various ages with a set of logical problem-solving tasks. By observing the children, Piaget postulated a set of cognitive processing strategies which children at certain ages were likely to exhibit. Before certain kinds of thinking were possible, children had to have progressed through other forms or stages of thought. Piaget demonstrated that children "think and act more egocentrically than adults, that they share

each other's intellectual life less than we do" (Piaget, 1959, p. 38). Therefore, younger children's thinking abilities are different from those of older children and children's thinking generally is different from adults. As Piaget (1959) states:

To put it quite simply, we may say that the adult thinks socially, even when he is alone, and that the child under 7 thinks egocentrically, even in the society of others (p. 40).

Donaldson and her colleagues (1978) question Piaget's notion of egocentrism. From their experiments, they have found evidence that children are not at any stage as egocentric as Piaget has claimed; children are not so limited in ability to reason deductively as Piaget and others have claimed; and that the child's language learning skills are not isolated from the rest of his mental growth. Vygotsky and his colleagues (1978) regarded egocentric speech as "the basis for inner speech, while in its external form it is embedded in communicative speech" (p. 27). They contended that the process of development of written language followed "a unified, historical line" which leads from speech, through make-believe play and drawing, to writing. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky (1962, 1978) proposed that thought and language transact, and one must look beyond spoken language at other uses of language.

According to Vygotsky (1978) the developmental history of written language indicates that when children first

attempt to write their writing consists of "meaningless and undifferentiated squiggles and lines", and often the audience for writing, is not considered. He also suggests that having a known audience can help the writer to clarify ideas, since in the writing experience the child is expected to dismiss the person with whom he would communicate and abandon oral language as well.

When young children write, they write for different purposes. Britton (1970) contends that most of the writing done in primary school is in the expressive mode which reflects the egocentrism of child thinking: ⊙

A young child's speech will be expressive for the very reason that in his egocentrism he finds it difficult or impossible to escape from his own point of view; to take into account his listener's - or indeed to suppose that 'things as they are' could differ from 'things as he sees them.' A child will take time therefore to learn how to respond to the demands of a situation requiring transactional speech (p. 169).

Britton (1970) further contends that there are other situations in which children change from 'expressive' and 'transactional' to 'formal' or 'poetic' speech. The expressive writing is writing that is done to reveal the self to self. Transactional writing is writing that is used for informing, advising, persuading and planning. Poetic writing shows a "heightened awareness of symbolic, aural and even visual qualities" (Britton et. al., 1976, p. 25).

Britton, et. al. (1976) of the Schools Council Project Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum, 11-16 studied samples of about 2,000 pieces of school writing which they collected from sixty-five secondary schools in England. They scrutinized two dimensions of writing: 'sense of audience' (who the writing was for) and 'function' (what it was for). With regards to sense of audience, they found that in school children write mostly for the teacher. When considering the different sorts of 'sense of audience,' the research team suggested these main categories:

1. Child (or adolescent) to self
2. Child (or adolescent) to trusted adult
3. Pupil to teacher as partner in dialogue
4. Pupil to teacher seen as examiner or assessor
5. Child (or adolescent) to his peers (as expert, co-worker, friend, etc.)
6. Writer to his readers (or unknown audience) (p. 18).

Writers need to be aware that their message or expression may be shared with an audience. Britton and his colleagues (1976) found expressive writing is "the seed bed from which more specialized and differentiated kinds of writing can grow - towards the greater explicitness of the transactional or the more conscious shaping of the poetic" (p. 26).

The writer believes there will always be a purpose for writing, whether it is writing for oneself such as journal writing or writing for others. Graves and his associates (1983) found that most children value the immediate audience of the classmates as well as the teacher; and, in his opinion, a sense of audience is vital as children make the transition from speech to print.

The Link Between Oral and Written Language

Oral language is an important part of the composing process of young children. Graves (1981) contends most children must produce language and sound as they write. When making the transition from oral to written discourse, he states some of the different types of sounds:

- (1) Sounding to probe for sound-symbol relations
- (2) Sounding to 'break off' a phonemic unit from the word under attack
- (3) Rereading language for reorientation in the composing unit. The child must hear where he is in the text. The difficulty or length of time spent on the composing operation determines how much the writer must reread
- (4) Conversations with friends: 'This monster is going to eat up all the good guys'
- (5) Procedural language: 'Now what am I going to do? No, this isn't right. I need to change it.'
Procedural language is a more

advanced form of transition from speech to print

- (6) Advanced statement of the text: The child says the text in order to sense the appropriateness of the current word. 'He cast the line into the stream.' The child is now writing 'cast' but wants to make sure it fits correctly into the rest of the sentence
- (7) Conversations before and after the composing. Not only is the child speaking during the composing, but language surrounds the entire written event (p. 21).

Graves contends that beginning writers "show through voice alone that writing is much more of a speech event than a writing event" (p. 22).

Dyson (1981) also emphasizes the important link between oral and written language. She suggests that:

By using the familiar, the comfortable way of communicating - as the context for their first writing, young children find diverse answers to the 'how-do-you-do-it' question: talk surrounds their written graphics, augmenting the message-producing power of first writing strategies.

She believes that early writing is only partly a paper and pencil activity; oral language, she contends, is the rooting system for learning to write (Dyson, 1981, p. 776).

Dyson (1983) later investigated the role of oral language in the early writing process of young children. She collected data daily over a three-month period in a kindergarten classroom. Her data consisted of audiotaped recordings of the children's talks at a writing center, written products,

observational notes and interviews with the children and their parents. From her study she concluded that:

Talk provided both meaning and, for some children, the systematic means for getting that meaning on paper. Any thematic content of written products often evolved in the talk preceding writing. Talk was also used to elaborate on the full meaning of products to audiences (e.g., "That's my mama's name."). Further, oral language was a tool for seeking needed information, assisting self in encoding and decoding, and, finally, distancing self from work (i.e., expressing evaluations of completed work) (p. 17).

Lamme and Childers (1983) also investigated the composing behaviors of three children ages two to four in sixteen episodes over a six-month period. Results of their study show that these children were "very verbal and social composers"; therefore they concluded that oral language was very necessary during the composing act.

Britton (1970) believes language can be used as a means of organizing a representation of the world, and that language provides the basis of all the predictions we use to operate in the world. Young children use language to make sense of their world. Britton (1970) suggests that talk is essential to learning, and he believes "in due course, writing will grow from talk" (p. 130). In an earlier article, "Talking and Writing" (1967), Britton again emphasized the close relationship between writing, talking and doing. He writes:

Moreover the spoken language remains the "recruiting area" for further linguistic resources. If you come to an unfamiliar area of experience about which you want to write - a problem, an unprecedented event - then the chances are you will talk before you write. In other words, even as mature users of language we go to talk as a first stage when a task achieves more than a certain degree of difficulty. In practical terms, then, all that children write, your response to what they write, their response to each other, all this takes place afloat upon a sea of talk. Talk is what provides the links between you and them and what they have written, between what they have written and each other (p. 29).

Research has shown that oral language is an essential part of the beginning writing process. Providing opportunities in the classroom for "muttering" and "chattering" is valuable and critical during the process of learning to write. Listening to one's own speech provides a bridge between the spoken and written word for young children (Dyson and Genishi, 1982).

Texts as Units of Meaning

Research has indicated that children begin school knowing how to express meanings in oral language. As King (1980) emphasizes, the child in communicating with people has acquired much more than words and syntax. She contends:

... they have learned what things mean and how to express their personal meaning to others. Language becomes the primary medium through which children encode experience, represent reality to themselves,

and express their personal meanings to others (p. 163).

Halliday (1973), while focusing on the functions that oral language serves, argues that spoken language has an interpersonal function while written language serves an ideational function. The interpersonal function is used in relating and communicating with others; it is person oriented. The ideational function enables the speaker to embody in language his experience of the real world. Language in this sense serves as a thinking function, a means of organizing and expressing knowledge in a logical manner. Halliday suggests that the interpersonal function predominates in spoken language while ideational is predominant in written text. As the child uses language to communicate he achieves increasing competence, and throughout this process the child is learning how to mean (Halliday, 1975, 1976).

Children at an early age try to express themselves in visual signs. Vygotsky (1962) suggests that these early "meaningless and undifferentiated squiggles and lines" have their origin in the actions and the gestures the child uses to indicate meaning. Even very young children "play" at writing; and once they get the idea of what can be done in writing, they discover more about the process.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out that texts are semantic units encoded in sentences. The semantic units

are made up of a kind of unity called texture - a semantic unity among the strands of meaning they are attempting to weave into a coherent whole. As King and Rental (1979) contend, by studying cohesive ties in the texts children produce, important patterns of the development of writing ability may be identified.

King (1980) believes an important step is made when children begin to sense that writing is different from speech. Writing, she contends, is a solitary activity.

A writer must maintain a flow of language and thought without the support of a conversational partner. Elementary school children's competence in language, however, is primarily in the area of conversational speech - question/answer, request/compliance, argument, anecdote, narration (p. 167).

Loban (1976) conducted a longitudinal study concerning the stages and growth of children's language in school from kindergarten through grade twelve at Oakland, California. Since part of the study concerned syntactic development, he investigated the average number of words per communication unit in both written and oral language. His findings on written language were based on compositions obtained from grades three to twelve. With regards to written language, he found the average number of words per communication unit did not parallel the smooth development pattern found in oral language.

The Developmental Stages of Writing

The Early Writing Process

Recent research studies on writing by Graves (1975, 1980), Bissett (1980), Clay (1975), King and Rentel (1981) and others indicate that writing, like so many other human behaviors (e.g. speaking and walking), is a developmental process which begins at a very early age. Knowledge about print production seems to occur naturally before children are ever exposed to any formal instruction. This natural course of writing development has been reported by Beers and Henderson (1977), who explored the strategies used by children who devised their own spellings in order to write, and the shifts that they made from invented spellings to conventional spelling on school entry. Read (1975) showed how children used their knowledge of the alphabet to invent spelling systems for recording written messages. Similarly, Carol Chomsky (1975) showed evidence that some children do write a great deal before they know how to read or have been given formal instruction in spelling.

An important investigation by Marie Clay (1975) indicates that sometime between the ages of three and five most children become aware that marks on paper and signs have a purpose and convey a message. Clay (1982) writes:

Children are constructing theories about print from diverse experiences - seeing print in the environment, putting pencil to paper, thumbing through

books and magazines, and receiving birthday cards, invitations and letters (p. 66).

These early discoveries by the child help him or her gain control over their language and provide insight for educators regarding writing programs in the schools.

Lamme and Childers (1983) suggest that very early in life children are intrinsically motivated to scribble (graphic representation) just as they are motivated to babble (verbal expression). Newman (1983) adds support to this perspective by maintaining that:

Children learn to write naturally, just as they learn to speak - they develop an understanding of literacy very early in their lives (p. 860).

How Writing Develops

Early scribbles are thought to be the origin of all drawing and writing. According to Dyson (1983), writing develops from a form of drawing, a graphic representation, to a form of language, specifically an orthographic representation. Dyson (1983) supports Vygotsky's position that children's first representations of meaning arise at first under symbolism; their first marks are written symbols which directly denote objects, people or actions.

Dyson (1983) believes that growth in writing is governed by broad developmental processes or principles; writing appears to follow the orthogenetic principle, as do other facets of human development. She suggests that initially,

mental activity is an undifferentiated fusion of concepts, processes and events. As development progresses, differentiation occurs; distinct and identifiable concepts and processes thus emerge. She contends that the conventional writing process of beginning writers involves four recursive and overlapping components: Message Formulation, Message Encoding, Mechanical Formation and Message Decoding. The child has a message, the child uses some strategy for encoding that message and the child then forms the letters. She found that early writing also involved only two components: Mechanical Formation and Message Decoding (Dyson, 1983, p. 17). A more detailed description of Dyson's broad developmental process or principles can be found in Appendix A.

Dyson's (1983) study complements the study done by Clay (1975) in which Clay analyzed samples of writing done by children between the ages of 4.10 and 8.0 years in New Zealand. Clay (1975) concluded that there may not be any fixed sequence of learning through which all children must pass in early writing. She suggests:

The insights the child must gain relate to arbitrary conventions by which our speech is recorded and it is possible to imagine that the learning of these conventions may be approached from a variety of directions. Eventually as each convention is mastered the children acquire a common fund of concepts but the point of entry and the path of progress may be different for any two children. Chance experiences may

produce new insights at any time which alter the entire learned pattern (p. 7).

Like Dyson, Clay believes that children develop writing ability by learning several principles. These principles are summarized as follows:

(a) The Recurring Principle. Very young children tend to produce the same mark over and over again. Children later realize that the same elements can be repeated in word patterns.

(b) The Directional Principle. When the children place words in a line, starting at the correct point and moving in the right direction, they are using this principle.

(c) The Generative Principle. When the children realize that they can make new messages with a different arrangement of known letters and words, they are following the generative principle.

(d) The Inventory Principle. When the children take stock of their own learning and list all the letters of words they can write, match symbols or even list unfamiliar words they have learned to use this principle.

(e) The Contrastive Principle. When children pair two elements together in order to note differences they are following the contrastive principle. An example of this would be children contrasting "and" with "AND."

(f) The Abbreviation Principle. This is an attempt by children to deliberately use one symbol implying a full

word, which the child could fill out if he were asked to (Clay, pp. 20-38). For example, the child may write S.O.S. indicating that the meaning of the message is understood.

Early scribbles are thought to be the origin of all drawing and writing. In New Zealand, Clay (1975) found that during the first year of school teachers did not emphasize penmanship since this was thought to inhibit the spontaneous efforts of children. She comments: "The creative urge of the child to write down his own ideas was considered to be the important thing to be fostered in written language" (p. 1). Clay agrees with the following alternatives in which children:

- (a) drew pictures and the teacher wrote dictated captions
- (b) traced over the teacher's script
- (c) copied captions
- (d) copied words around the room
- (e) remembered word forms, and wrote them independently
- (f) invented (generated) word forms, often correctly
- (g) got a written copy of unknown words from the teacher (p. 1).

Clay (1975) found that elements of adult writing were present in virtually all of the children's early attempts at writing. By experimenting with print the writers became aware of the existence of a written code and set about discovering it.

Clay (1982) reports that she is reluctant to talk about stages in development; however, she supports a developmental view in which young writers move by various routes across several strands of language learning:

- trying to get a theory about written language
- trying to construct stories.
- exploring sound to spelling patterns
- developing new language options and
- developing a range of writing forms (p. 69).

Broadly viewed, she contends that children's writing development shows a movement from the early attempts at drawing and scribbling from "gross approximations" which later become refined: weird letter forms, invented words, make-believe sentences" (Clay, 1977, p. 336).

King and Rentel (1981), as part of their longitudinal study, also assessed children's development with respect to their concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing. Children's written texts were rated on ordinal scales demonstrating the attributes of each category. These three scales provided an ordinal index of the extent to which children, over time, incorporated various dimensions of each category. They found that many children demonstrated that they understood spacing and directionality well before they demonstrated a concept of message.

Newman (1983) describes writing as a problem-solving process. The young writers explore rules governing the concepts of letters, words, sentences and forms of discourse. Their writing samples demonstrate a movement towards more differentiated concepts of print. Deford (1980) has developed the following framework for understanding children's development of writing:

1. Scribbling
2. Differentiation between drawing and writing
3. Concepts of linearity, uniformity, inner complexity, symmetry, placement, left-to-right motion, and top to bottom directionality
4. Development of letters and letter-like shapes
5. Combination of letters, possibly with spaces, indicating understanding of units (letters, words, sentences), but may not show letter/sound correspondence
6. Writing known isolated words - developing sound/letter correspondence
7. Writing simple sentences with use of invented spellings
8. Combining two or more sentences to express complete thoughts
9. Control of punctuation - periods, capitalization, use of upper and lower case letters
10. Form a discourse - stories, information material, letters, etc. (p. 162).

Deford suggests that these stages are by no means sequential for all children but there is a suggestion of growing sophistication, as more of the child's strategies and concepts become refined and writing becomes more reflective of conventional writing.

Graves (1973) studied the writing process of a group of seven year old children. Further research done by Graves and his team of researchers involving direct observation of young children while they write, found that even first grade children can become successful writers if they are given control of their own writing.

Graves (1973) and his researchers observed fifty-three writing episodes of the fourteen subjects involved in the investigation. A single writing episode was considered to consist of three phases of observation: prewriting, composing and postwriting. He describes these phases as follows:

Prewriting phase. This phase immediately precedes the writing of the child. Writing factors observed in this phase are the contribution of room stimuli to writing choice, rehearsal factors as in art work, discussions with other children and the teacher.

Composing phase. This phase begins and ends with the actual writing of the message. Examples of phase factors are spelling, resource use, accompanying language, pupil interaction, proofreadings, rereadings, interruptions, erasures, and teacher participation.

Postwriting phase. This phase refers to all behaviors recorded following the completion of writing the message. Examples of these behaviors are product disposition, proofreading, and contemplation of the finished product (p. 100).

The Writing Environment

Recent research on the developmental process of writing as described in the previous sections indicate that children know far more about language when they enter school than is generally assumed. The writing environment can allow children to feel comfortable when experimenting with written language as well as oral language.

Newman (1983) contends that an environment which permits children to take risk, to experiment and to invent is one which fosters writing development.

Harste, Burke, and Woodward (1983), who studied the writing and reading process of preschool and elementary school children, agree that risk is a central feature of the process of literacy and literacy learning. Without risk, they believe, children will not be allowed to develop control over the writing process. They contend that:

The role risk plays in the literacy process needs to be supported, facilitated, and reflected in the advice and programs we provide and design for written language learners of all ages (p. 257).

Children are exposed to various forms of print in their environment such as labels, signs and books which

make them aware of the function and use of print. As Bissex (1981) writes:

Just as children learn to talk by talking in an environment that is full of talk, children learn to write by writing in an environment full of writing and writings (p. 787).

McDonell and Osburn (1980) give further support to the argument that children learn to write by writing in a risk-taking environment. They claim that:

Writing is a skill that can flourish only if children have freedom to experiment with the written word. Since no human skill can be mastered unless it is constantly practised, opportunities to communicate in writing must occur daily if children are to advance (p. 310).

It is suggested by McDonell and Osburn (1980) that opportunities to communicate in writing must occur daily if children are to advance. Errors must occur if progress is to be made, as these indicate growth toward conventional writing.

In a study done by Birnbaum (1980), the relationship of certain nonacademic and academic experiences to differences in children's views of composing and level of proficiency in composing was investigated. By means of a case study of eight students from fourth and seventh grades she found that, with one exception, the more proficient writers came from academic environments that were conducive to learning the values and purposes of composing. She concludes by saying:

To develop the ability to engage in composing with different levels of response, the young child must explore the uses of whole language in a context free from the fear of error (p. 209).

Summary

Learning to write appears to be a developmental process which starts at a very early age. Oral language is an important part of the beginning writing process since it is used to make early attempts at print meaningful. A stimulating writing environment may help to ensure that the child's writing process develops naturally.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sample

In this study the writing process of a group of six-year-old children was examined by the researcher as a participant-observer in a grade one classroom. The researcher both observed and interacted with all twenty-seven children; however, the main focus in observation was with the selected six children in order to gain more indepth information on children's perception of what is involved in writing and the thinking behind particular writing behaviors.

This grade-one classroom was chosen for a six-month investigation. There were twelve females and fifteen males whose mean age was 6.6 at the beginning of this study. The six children were chosen during the first phase of the study. Of the six, two represented children who, according to Marie Clay's "Concept About Print" Test, rated above the average stanine score of 5; two children were representative of an average group (stanine score of 5) and the remaining two belonged to a group scoring below the average stanine of 5.

Basis of Selection

To study writing, a first essential was to select a school and a classroom in which the curriculum encouraged

writing from children at the beginning of grade one. In some schools that were considered by the researcher, writing was not encouraged until late in grade one and at the beginning of grade two. In these schools teachers may feel that the students are unable to write because, as one teacher commented, "the children do not know enough words yet." In the grade-one classroom chosen for this study children appeared to, as Graves emphasizes, "want to write" and did write four days a week. The second reason for selecting this classroom was that in this school the researcher could move easily collect data and observe the children. The teacher involved was most cooperative and a good rapport was easily established.

Writing was usually integrated into the language arts program at this school. Some emphasis was placed on literature in the classroom in that the teacher read aloud, discussed books and organized books for study around a common theme. The teacher used a modified language experience approach for reading. The Nelson Language Development Program was used with the class in general as a basis of their language arts program.. In addition, the Gage Series and Open Highways Series were used for language arts instruction in small group situations.

During writing, emphasis was not placed on correct spelling and capitalization. In the Nelson Language Development Program some phonics was taught but not overemphasized.

During the entire study the children were encouraged to use invented spelling. Invented spelling was one way that children could express their awareness of print before formal instruction in spelling took place. The children used their knowledge of letter names to graphically represent sounds. Throughout this process the children created their own spelling of words. They also used words from their own word dictionaries, their readers and charts around the room. Emphasis was placed on sharing their stories with the class. The content of the stories was seen as more important than mechanics or correct spelling.

Data Collection Procedures

Throughout the data collection period from the third week of October 1984 to the last week of April 1985, emphasis was placed on gathering data on the six children chosen for investigation. The gathering of extensive writing samples and the naturalistic observation of the six children provided a range of cross-validation of data to support the findings. In addition, the gathering of a full case study data through a parent interview, testing, assembling of an educational-developmental history and observations in several environments, helped to develop research recommendations for teachers of writing.

The data were collected primarily in the morning sessions between 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. during a language arts

period. As previously mentioned the children in this study wrote four mornings a week, and in two of these sessions the researcher recorded behaviors accompanying the writing episode.

Data collection proceeded through three general overlapping phases. Each phase is described in the following sections.

Phase One (Weeks 1-3)
Preliminary Observation/Initial Assessment

During this phase the writing behaviors of the twenty-seven children were assessed in order to identify six children as the prime focus of the study. During this phase Clay's (1975) rating scale for early writing was used to estimate the level of the child's written expression. Three samples of written work of the twenty-seven children involved were collected and analyzed over the three-week period. Each child's written products were sorted according to the level of language organization, understanding of message and sense of directionality (Clay, pp. 66-67). From these classifications, six boys and six girls were selected and a portion of Clay's Concepts About Print Test was administered to further determine each child's stanine score which indicates the child's status relative to a norming group of children in the age group 5.00 to 7.00 years. A stanine score is a normalized standard score of nine units, with a low score of 1 and high score of 9 (Clay, 1979, pp. 17-21). From the original

of twelve, the six children were selected from this group as the main focus of the study.

Phase Two (Weeks 4-23)
Major Data Collection

During this phase primary emphasis was placed on gathering data on the selected six children and a secondary emphasis was placed on gathering data on the remainder of the class. During the beginning of this phase, the T-unit or communication unit was used as a method of quantifying syntactic development. The six children's writing samples were analyzed according to Loban's (1976) definition of a communication unit: "an independent clause with modifiers" (p. 105). Hunt (1969) used this same method of segmentation in his research and referred to it as the T-unit. The following example illustrates the method of tallying communication units.

Examples of Communication Units

(Transcript of subjects' actual language)

I'm going to get a boy 'cause he hit me/I'm going to beat him up an' kick him in his nose/and I'm going to get the girl, too./

Number of Communication Units - 3
Number of Words Per Unit - 11, 13, 9

At the end of phase two this procedure was repeated in order to compare and assess the syntactic development of the selected six children over the six-month period.

In this stage writing of the children was observed in the classroom situation in order to gain an ecologically

valid view of their writing process. The researcher sat with the child to be observed at his or her table, noting behaviors that accompanied the writing. The procedure for recording the composing behaviors of the children will be discussed in a later portion of this chapter.

In addition to observational notes, data collected during phase two consisted of the children's written products and the researcher's daily journal entries of trends perceived in the class as a whole as well as among individual children.

Phase Three (Weeks 24-25)

Completion of Case Study, Final Analysis of Children's Products and Writing Episodes and Interviews

During this stage a detailed study of one child began. The child's teacher from the previous year was interviewed. As well, the parents were interviewed regarding the child's early experiences with print. These data were gathered in phase three after the classroom observations were completed in an effort not to influence the child's writing behaviors in phase two.

In addition, the twenty-seven children were interviewed individually about their perceptions of what is required to learn how to write and the purposes for writing.

Evaluation Criteria for Children's Writing

Owing to a lack of research in this field, few criteria for the evaluation of beginning writing have emerged.

According to Graves (1980) a careful assessment is necessary in order to see where the child is in terms of his or her control of the writing process. Such an assessment would help the teacher determine where the child is in his developmental process and determine how he is progressing in relation to his own development, not in comparison to the class. The procedure developed and used by Graves (1973) for recording behaviors in the composing phase of writing and an example of a developmental scale are contained in Figures 1 and 2.

King and Rentel (1981) developed three sets of categories from an analysis of children's written scripts in order to assess children's development with respect to their concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing. The first, Concept of Message Categories (CMC), incorporated the concept of sign. The other two concerned how writing appears on the page in respect to left-right direction and word and sentence boundaries (King and Rentel, 1981, p. 114-122). Their criteria are described below respectively.

Concepts of Message Categories

- 0 Child draws a picture, but does not use any letters or numbers. S/he may use other signs--i.e., stars, Xs plus or minus signs. Child may or may not respond when asked to tell about her/his production.
- 1 Letters and/or numbers scattered haphazardly across the page, with or without a picture. When asked to

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>A whale is eating the 1 2 3 4 5 men. A dinosaur is 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 trying to eat the whale. 13 14 15 16 17 18 A dinosaur is frowning 19 20 21 22 23 24 a tree at the lion. and 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 the cavman too. the men 33 34 35 36 37 38 are killed. The dinosaur 39 40 41 42 43 killed the whale. The 44 45 46 47 48 cavmen like is the roks. 50 51 52 53 54 55 56</p> | <p>10:12</p> <p>IU R</p> <p>RR OV OV IS</p> <p>RR RR</p> <p>RR 10:20</p> | <p>9 - Gets up to get dictionary. Has the page with pictures of animals.</p> <p>10 - Teacher announcement. 11 - Copies from dictionary and returns book to side of room.</p> <p>18 - Stops, rubs eyes. 19 - Rereads from 13 to 19. 20 - Voices as he writes. 21 - Still voicing. 24 - Gets up to sharpen pencil and returns.</p> <p>25 - Rereads from 2. 30 - Rereads to 56. Lost starting point.</p> <p>48 - Puts away paper, takes out again.</p> <p>56 - Rereads outloud from 49 to 56.</p> |
|--|--|--|

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure or Proofreading; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; PR - Proofread; DR - Works on drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

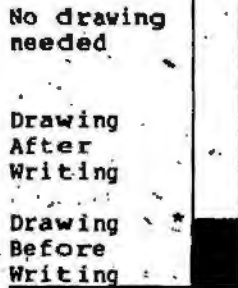
Figure 1

Example of a Writing Episode
(Graves, 1973, p. 40)

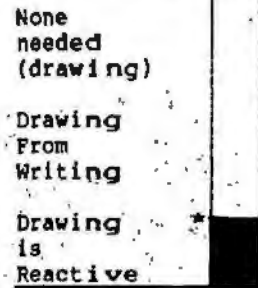
Writing Process Behaviors of Seven Year Olds
A Developmental Scale

I - Prewriting Behaviors

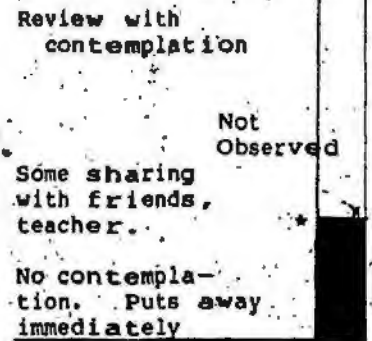
1. Drawing use



2. Drawing approach

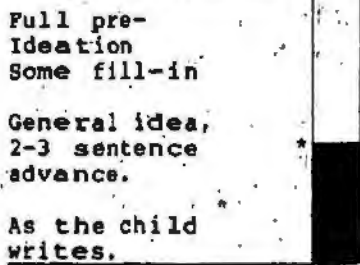


II - Postwriting Behaviors

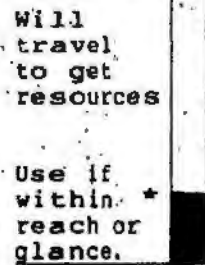


III - Composing Behaviors

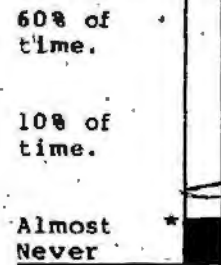
1. Prewriting Ideation



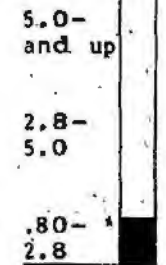
2. Resource Use



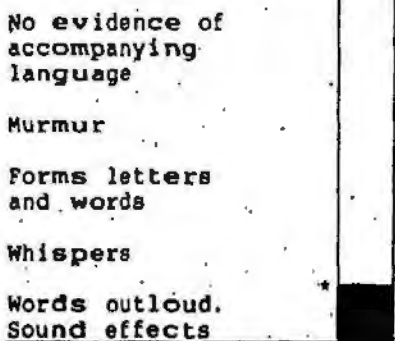
3. Proofread After Writing



4. Words per Minute



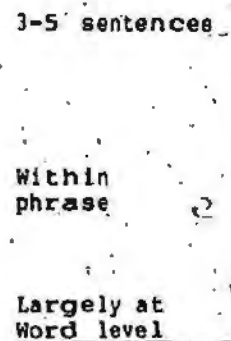
5. Overtiness of Accompanying Language



6. Rereading during writing



7. Proofread during writing



■ - Writing Episode Reported * - Mean Placement - Six Other Writing Episodes

Figure 2

Writing Process Behaviors of Seven Year Olds
A Developmental Scale
(Graves, 1973, p. 101)

retell child responds to picture and/or does not attempt to match writing to speech.

- 2 Letter and/or number strings, message from print only in a global sense.
- 3 Letter and/or number strings, but message from print in a more specific sense, i.e., child matches at least part of spoken message to parts of print. Included are single word labels for pictures and letter strings in which only a few words are actually discernable.
- 4 Copied repeated patterns (e.g. I love ..., My dog is nice, my dog is good...,) - Assume these are original (5 below) unless strong evidence for actual copying.
- 5 Invented repeated patterns (see 4 above). Also include here brief single phrase or clause labels.
- 6 Piece of writing in which fairly original and varied phrases and/or sentences are used to convey message. Writing may or may not include conventional punctuation, capitalization or spelling. Length and ideas may vary considerably.

Directionality Categories

- 0 No writing present.
- 1 Letters, words and/or numbers scattered across page at various angles.
- 2 Letter strings, basically appear left-right, top-bottom, but words not discernable.
- 3 Recognizable words arranged in a fairly consistent pattern but not appropriate for English, e.g., right-left, bottom-top, around picture.
- 4 Overall directionality consistent, but several words and/or many letters reversed.
- 5 General conventional directionality with occasional lapses often caused by page constraints (e.g., corner turning, beginning new line in middle of page, etc.)
- 6 Brief phrase or label, only one line, directionality left-right. Include here also labels under individual objects.

- 7 Correct directionality throughout text (at least two lines) but crookedness of lines to the point of causing line/word order confusion.
- 8 Conventional directionality throughout.

Spacing Categories

- 0 No letters and/or numbers written.
- 1 Individual or groups of letters and/or numbers scattered across page.
- 2 Strings of letters, even possibly two or more lines, but no spacing within lines.
- 3 Strings of letters, possibly including a very few discernable words, with some break down into groups indicating some sense of spacing.
- 4 Recognizable words, but almost all run-on. Minimal spacing (25% of boundaries or less).
- 5 Moderate spacing (35-70% of boundaries).
- 6 Unique or ideosyncratic spacing conventions used (e.g., one word per line, exceptionally large spaces or slashes between each word.)
- 7 Single phrase or clause (possibly copied) well spaced..
- 8 Consistently spaces throughout (70%+) with occasional run-on pair or split word (possibly caused by page edge problems). Message a minimum of two clauses and two lines.
- 9 Conventional spacing throughout message.

The Researcher's Evaluation Criteria for Children's Writing

The first set of evaluation criteria for children's writing used by the researcher dealt with recording behavior during the writing episode of the observation period. The second set of criteria again dealt with the children's

development in respect to their concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing. The third criterion consisted of analyzing the children's writing by means of the T-unit or communication unit as a method of quantifying syntactic development over the six-month period.

The criteria first developed by the researcher were for recording behaviors of the selected six children during the composing phase. They approximated Graves' (1973) criteria and are contained in Figure 3. In the left column the researcher recorded exactly what the child wrote. The sequence and significant acts were recorded by the numerals, the circled numerals giving explanations of the specific behaviors noted. For example, the circled 4 in the left-hand column was explained following the 4 in the right-hand column. The key listed was also adapted from Graves (1973) and indicated the range of behaviors monitored when the child engaged in the writing episode. Teacher involvement (T) was any form of teacher interaction with a child during the writing episode. Interruptions (15-10) were monitored for their effect on the continuance of the child's writing. Rereadings and proofreadings (RR and PR) indicated other writing habits. Rereadings were the child's rescanning of writing composed prior to the current word being written. Proofreading was defined as an adjustment of previously composed writing. When the drawing was adjusted to go

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior | |
|---|---|--|
| Fred is A good Singer 1 2 3 4 5 and He sag A ez sing 6 7 8 9 10 11 And it was cild ths 12 13 14 15 16 Oad Man He Pd 1 17 18 19 20 21 And it was Rll ez 22 23 24 25 26 cs we got. it on 27 28 29 30 31 Owr Rcd And we had 32 33 34 35 36 lots of fun 37 38 39 | 10:00 5. T 8. OV 10. OV, RR 11. RR 15. T, OV 16-17. OV 18. IU 20. RR 25. OV 32. RR 33. OV 10:20 | 10 - Rereads from 1-10. 11 - Rereads from 1-11. 18 - Chaplain visits. 20 - Rereads from 1-20. 25 - Voices as she writes. 32 - Rereads from 1-32. 33 - Voices as she writes. 37 - Hesitates and copies 37-39 from chalk-board. |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 3

Example of a Writing Episode of the Researcher

with a new idea in the text, (DR) was used. The use of resources to aid writing (R) such as word dictionaries, classroom charts and readers was recorded. Finally, the language behavior from OV (overt full voicing) to S (covert) absence of any visible or aural indication of accompanying language was noted.

A developmental scale adapted from Graves was implemented by the researcher in order to obtain the child's developmental level in writing. This scale was used to obtain a profile and rating of the six selected children's writing process behaviors. As Graves (1973) reported, children at the lowest level of development used numerous word trials; used voiced overt language and had a slow word writing rate. Children reflecting a high developmental profile were strong in composing at word-unit level and wrote rapidly without accompaniment of overt language. Idea flow in this profile was fluid, reflecting a well developed pre-writing idea structure, and no evidence of rereadings was present.

The criteria used by the researcher in order to assess children's development with respect to their concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing were the three sets of categories developed by King and Rentel (1981), which are summarized below.

Concept of Message. Children were classified in this category to get at their differing levels of awareness of relationships that exist between messages expressed

by written text and the combinations of letters used to represent the various parts of those messages. The categories differentiate between children with no or little understanding (picture carries message), a vague global understanding (letter strings), the ability to copy or construct limited repetitious message (copied or invented patterns) and the ability to construct an original and varied "readable message."

Spacing and Directionality. The writing of the selected group of six children was classified in terms of their use of spacing and directionality conventions. This concerned how the writing appeared on the page in respect to left-right direction and word and sentence boundaries. The scales developed by King and Rentel (1981) have been described in a previous section. These scales were used by the researcher to assess the six children's knowledge of written language at equal intervals during the study.

The third measure concerned the average number of words per communication unit. Loban (1976) found that the average number of words per communication unit proved to be one of the most crucial measures of fluency during his investigation. At the beginning of Phase Two and at the end of Phase Two the T-unit analysis was carried out by the researcher.

Summary

Since there is little information available on the actual behaviors evidenced by children when writing, there is a need to explore the writing process in such a way that effective research hypotheses and recommendations can be made.

By focusing on the behavior of children when they write and by analyzing the children's written products, the researcher hoped to gain significant clues to understanding the totality of the writing situation. In addition, it was hoped that the case study would portray in detail what transpires as the child moves through the successive steps of learning to write.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to explore the writing processes and products of a selected group of six-year-old children and to describe the developmental process of writing through a case study of one child. The goal of the researcher was to gain an understanding of early writing from the point of view of the child and to subsequently make recommendations for the classroom teacher.

Conclusions and recommendations concerning children's writing were formulated in this study through the reporting and analyzing of data gathered by the following procedures:

1. The recording of behaviors observed during children's writing episodes.
2. The periodic reviewing of children's writing project books and journals throughout the study.
3. The collecting of daily journal entries by the researcher.
4. The collecting of data from a parent interview and extended observations of the case-study child.
5. The recording of children's perception of what is required in learning how to write and the purposes for writing. These data were collected

through personal interviews with all the first-grade children involved.

Figure 4 shows the reporting order used by the researcher. The Phase I report describes the environment and teaching approaches used by the participating teacher. The Phase II report describes writing episodes for each of the six children and summarizes data on the writing process. Since children's writing behaviors and products show developmental sequence, the Phase III report describes the analysis of the syntactic development of the six children and the range of children's knowledge sophistication of print conventions (concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing as proposed by King and Rentel, 1981).

Phase IV summarizes data on the interviews with twenty-seven children concerning their perceptions of what is required in learning how to write and the purposes for writing. The fifth phase, "a case study of Paula," concludes Chapter IV.

The purpose of this form of presentation is to provide a wide range of findings and thus add depth to the research conclusions and recommendations for the classroom teacher.

In order to observe the development of writing, the research methodology in the present study may be classified as naturalistic research as opposed to experimental research. This study was designed to provide situations in which

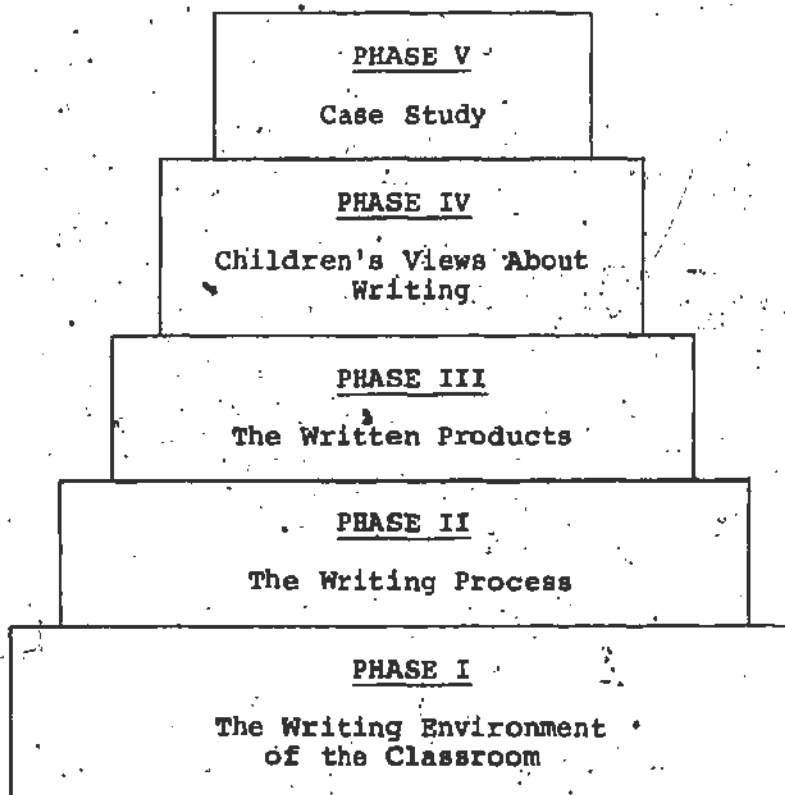


FIGURE 4
Phases of Reporting the Study
Chapter IV

"natural" behavior could be systematically observed. Consequently, the present investigation makes no attempt to test a hypothesis nor to manipulate the subject's behavior. The research concern of the present study was not to find cause and effect relationships but to comprehensively describe the writing behaviors of six year old children. For example, the investigation included the observation of writing during the prewriting, composing and postwriting phases as reported by Graves (1973). Recordings of the children's writing behaviors were made when they chose to initiate writing. For some children drawing was an important step in the prewriting phase. Other children voiced words and constantly reread in order to reorient themselves to the idea flow in their writing. The different writing behaviors of the children were monitored by the researcher to gain an understanding of the writing process.

A constant concern during the study was reducing the effect of the researcher with regards to influencing the children's classroom writing behaviors. Therefore, at the beginning of the study the participating teacher tried to reduce this effect by informing the class, "Boys and girls we have a new visitor in our classroom this morning. Would anyone like to guess as to who our visitor might be?" One child replied, "A mommy." The teacher responded, "Yes, certainly she may be someone's mommy. Any other suggestions?" Another child replied, "A helper." At this

school the children had been exposed to parent volunteers since kindergarten; consequently, the researcher became accepted immediately as a helper. Additionally, it was explained to the children that the researcher was very interested in what the children were doing in this classroom and that she would be in the classroom for a long while watching many of the interesting things that they did. From the beginning of the investigation the researcher observed and interacted with the children and was seen by the children as an interested, nonthreatening adult.

Phase I
The Writing Environment of the Classroom

As previously discussed in the review of the literature, the setting for children's writing has an important bearing on both the process and the product. The writing environment of the classroom selected for study is described below by focusing upon the following questions:

1. What are the conditions that foster writing development?
2. Will children write if specific topics are not given?
3. When children are given independent choice, what topics will they choose?

Twenty-seven children were seated at desks arranged in groups of six and seven around the center of the room. Beyond the desks and around the outside of the room there

was a listening area, library area and an area with equipment that was available for children to use in the centers or on special projects being constructed in other areas of the room. The centers were usually done during the afternoon session and changed weekly. When each center was introduced the children discussed their new centers and usually showed great interest in each activity. The large bulletin board at the rear of the room and two small boards on each side of the room contained children's writing and art work.

The language arts were taught in the morning, usually between 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Most of the children's writing activity occurred during this period.

Two basic approaches were demonstrated in the teaching of Mrs. B., the participating teacher. In the first approach the teacher was the prime motivator and assigned specific writing topics. However, if the children did not want to write on the particular assigned topic they were allowed to write on a topic of their own. In the second approach, Mrs. B. encouraged the children to write in their journals without assigned topics. When the children were left with no discussion, reading, or teacher explanation, it appeared that the journal writing was not as productive as writing occurring in the first approach. Children wrote in this approach, but, if guide questions were not provided, the children's idea flow was not as fluid as in the first approach. Mrs. B. felt that a stimulus to writing encouraged the

children to develop a framework of ideas or a better understanding of what they wanted to write. This framework helps to strengthen the idea flow and subsequently increase the child's composing speed and length of composition. Journals were usually completed biweekly. The teacher designed questions for the children to answer concerning activities that took place at home and in school. For example:

1. What did you like best of all about this week in school?
2. What did you do this weekend?
3. What did you do last night?

Figure 5 illustrates an approach used in journal writing.

Nov 30
I liked doing
centres I like centres
At home I played
in the snow
I like making up the
centres too and I love
playing in the snow. What
did you like about this
week?

translation:

I liked doing
centres. I like centres.
At home I played
in the snow.

Figure 5

Example of Journal Writing - A

It is worth noting that later in the year this same child adopted the questioning style used by the teacher (see Figure 6).

What did you do this

Christmas I got Lots
of presents

I had lots of fun at

Christmas what did you

get for Christmas

I got Lots of toys

I asked my mother in

Gloverston and I got lots of

presents too. We got a VCR,

that was nice. What did you

do this week?

translation:

What did you do this

Christmas? I got lots
of presents.

I had lots of fun at

Christmas. What did you
get for Christmas?

I got lots of toys.

Figure 6

Example of Journal Writing - B

The Nelson Language Development Reading Program, a basal reading and language series, was used as a basis for most writing assignments. Occasionally, the children might be called together in a large group session to discuss books read by the teacher and children or to discuss special field trips they had undertaken during the study. Writing stimuli were strongly rooted in the suggestions children made to each other or in family events and experiences.

The teacher's role in the teaching of writing was observed to be one of introducing ideas and stimulating and encouraging children while they were writing. During the writing she would circulate, observe and primarily provide

a stimulating, supportive environment. The following transcripts illustrate how ideas for writing were introduced.

Transcript one:

Mrs. B.: We have just finished the Bumpity stories.
What makes them different from other stories
we did? Who was Bumpity?

Class: A little red car.

Mrs. B.: What was special about him?

Class: He could talk.
He tried to get to the fair.
He was very sad.

Mrs. B.: Tina has brought some figurines that she
had at home that helped Bumpity. (Tina
brings the figurines to Mrs. B. and holds
the figurines for the class to see)
What did the Little Red Hen do?

Class: Cranked him up.

Mrs. B.: The pig?

Class: Changed the flat tire.

Mrs. B.: Moo Cow?

Class: He was strong, he pushed Bumpity out of
the mud.

Mrs. B.: And then what happened?

Class: They all got into the car and went to the
fair. (Mrs. B. shows a picture chart of
Bumpity).

3

Mrs. B.: This morning I'm going to give you some titles and you can choose a title to write about or you can choose your own title if you wish. We can write about Bumpity's being sad. Do you have your idea of what you want to write about? Remember, this can be a make-believe story.

Transcript Two:

Mrs. B.: Yesterday, you found scary notes around the classroom. Think about a scary sound and a scary story if you have one. Tell us something that happened to you.

Class: I dreamed about a snake around me. Sometimes I get scared nighttime when I wake up.

Mrs. B.: Do you think you see monsters sometimes when you awake during the night?

How many of you have a night light in your room?

How many of you have no light? (Children responded by raising their hands).

Mrs. B.: Sometimes it is better to keep your door closed to your room - in case of a fire. The smoke would not get to you so quickly.

Class: Last night I heard a tapping sound on my window. I put my head under my pillow. I was too scared to look out.

Class: When I was sleeping I had a nightmare. I put my pillow over my head.

Class: One night the power went off and I was scared. Mommy came in and put her arms around me and I was O.K.

Class: Sometimes in the nighttime I get scared and I go out and sleep with Mom and Dad.

Class: Last year in April when we got up the window was broken.

Class: One time I saw a light in my window. I called my Dad but it was only the snow plow.

Class: One time I slept down to Nanny's and I couldn't sleep all night because the wind was making a funny noise in the chimney.

Class: One time I dreamed about Frankenstein. I kicked all of the blankets off. Mom said I could get in her bed.

Mrs. B.: Last night I asked you to think about a scary picture and write a story or scary note. Write a scary story or scary note in your storybooks. Remember the scary story we did yesterday in our reader.

It appears that the children's interests were kept in mind as Mrs. B. selected various topics or story starters for the children's writing. Usually specific topics or story starters were given throughout the year. Examples of these included the following:

- Pets
- Report on Visit to Arts and Culture Centre
- A Monster Story
- Thanksgiving
- Our Halloween Party
- Our School
- My Fairy Tale
- Animals
- The Leprecaun
- Turtles
- All About Me
- Birds
- Kittens
- A Bear Story
- Christmas
- The Surprise Party
- Mittens
- Friends
- A Scary Story
- Giraffes
- Once Upon a Time ...
- Easter
- Tigers

Throughout the researcher's observations, topics or story starters were consistently introduced through discussion, reading and teacher explanation. As special days or events were covered, the children's topics became seasonally oriented, as in "The Leprecaun".

Occasionally, a choice of topics for writing was given to the children. For example, at 9:00 a.m. Mrs. B. called all the children together to sit on the floor. Discussion during an observation on November 1, 1984, centered around

the children's experiences during Halloween Night. Various children shared personal information about this special occasion. Mrs. B. suggested that they could write about their experiences during Halloween Night or about anything they wanted. An analysis of the twenty-seven stories arising from this instruction showed the following:

Table 1
Distribution of Story Topics

| Topic Choice | Number of Writings |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Chickens | 1 |
| Sailing Boats | 2 |
| The Halloween Party | 2 |
| Why I Like Halloween | 1 |
| Total Unassigned Topics | 6 |
| Total Assigned Topics | 21 |

Essentially, the above distribution indicates that the majority of the class wanted to stay close to the assigned topic. From observation in the classroom it appears that sometimes it is not easy for the child in the beginning stages of writing to switch interest and concentrate on the topic at hand. For example, during one observation early in the study in October, Mrs. B., the participating teacher, had started word dictionaries with the children. The children, during the particular observation, began their language arts period by writing all the words they

could think of that began with "A" in their word dictionaries. The teacher encouraged them to use these words to help them write their story if the need arose. One child was very interested in this activity and seemed preoccupied with his word dictionary when he began writing his story. On this occasion Mrs. B. read the King Midas fairy tale, discussed fairy tales and asked the class to try to write a fairy tale. The child observed by the researcher wrote the story shown in Figure 7.

There was a boy
Hoo. ate an apple
in April.
Excellent! 😊

translation:

There was a boy
who ate an apple
in April.

Figure 7

Example of A - Words Story

When the child read his story to the class later, he explained "I had all A-words." One explanation may be that the child was not interested in a fairy tale as much as making "A" words. Again, this may indicate the inappropriateness of using fairy tales at the beginning of first grade and expecting children of that age group to understand the elements of fairy tales without repeated exposure to this genre of literature. An alternative explanation may be that very

young writers seem to write sometimes for their own sake. At this early age, as Graves (1983) concluded, beginning writing is a highly egocentric act until children become aware of their audience and understand the writing process. A review of the twenty-seven stories on this particular occasion revealed that less than half of the class wrote a fairy tale. This may indicate that at the beginning stages of writing children seem to ignore audiences or suggestions from others and see writing as egocentric play.

Summary

Throughout the study Mrs. B. experimented with various themes and different ways of presenting them. As previously explained, a significant amount of writing was stimulated by a combination of teacher suggestions and story starters largely based on themes from The Nelson Language Development Reading Program. Various children's literature such as Maurice Sendak's picture book Where the Wild Things Are was read aloud to extend the children's experiences. It seemed that the children at this age group were most excited about relating various firsthand experiences in their stories. Reporting on a trip they undertook together or relating an incident regarding a woodpecker a child saw on the way to the bus stop often suggested messages which each child was able to expand and make meaningful. Given encouragement

the children were able to say what they saw or felt, to listen to others and to experiment with ways of expressing their ideas to others.

Phase II The Writing Process

In Phase II the researcher has summarized the data which were generated by the eighteen six year old children during fifty-seven writing episodes. A writing episode, previously discussed in Chapter II, included three major phases: prewriting, composing and postwriting. The researcher used a Developmental Writing Scale adapted from Graves (1973) to report the writing behaviors observed and to summarize the observational data on the children's writing episodes. Recordings were made of the children's writing behaviors during each of the three writing phases. Because some of the six children may have been absent during some of the observations, twelve of the fifty-seven writing episodes recorded were not from the selected group of six children.

This phase reports on the writing process of the six children selected for intense investigation. The results of the process observation will be discussed by categories of performance according to Marie Clay's (1979) Concepts About Print Test as discussed in Chapter III. This information is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Achievement of Selected Group of Children
(Marie Clay's "Concept of Print" Test, 1979)

| Categories | Subjects | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Lori Ann | Jerome | Kimberly | Blair | Paula | David |
| Group One | | | | | | |
| Below the average stanine of 5 | X | X | | | | |
| Group Two | | | | | | |
| Average stanine of 5 | | | X | X | | |
| Group Three | | | | | | |
| Above the average stanine of 5 | | | | | X | X |

Group One - Writing Episodes

The first of the three groups of children, Lori Ann and Jerome, is reported in this section. The writing episodes, which follow, demonstrate Lori Ann's and Jerome's writing development and control over the writing process. Writing episodes discussed belong to the group of children who represent below-the-average stanine of 5 (Marie Clay's Concept of Print Test, 1979).

Prewriting Phase - November 21, 1984. The class was given a picture of baby birds with their mother and father feeding them. A discussion followed with the children sharing ideas generated by the picture. Later Mrs. B. asked the class to write about the picture. Lori Ann talked to various children in her group as she cut and glued the picture in her storybook.

Composing Phase - November 21, 1984. Lori Ann's accompanying language for this episode was classified as overt (see Figure 8). She wrote slowly and struggled at the word level. Included in Figure 9 is a comparison of her writing development during the course of the study.

Postwriting Phase - November 21, 1984. Lori Ann colored the picture and when finished went to Mrs. B. and read the story to her.

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|---|--|
| <p>the birds r fedns the</p> <p>① ② ③ ④ 5</p> <p>babzs worms</p> <p>⑥ ⑦</p> <p>translation:</p> <p>The birds are feeding the</p> <p>babies worms.</p> | <p>9:20</p> <p>OV</p> <p>1. ///</p> <p>T</p> <p>2. R</p> <p>3. T, R, OV</p> <p>4. T, R, OV</p> <p>6. T, R, OV</p> <p>7. R</p> <p>9:45</p> <p>Lori Ann cuts out picture., Lori Ann: "Have you got glue, Paula?" "I'm doing it side- ways." "Let me see your new pencil case, Paula." 1 - Copies 'birds' and 'worms' from chalkboard. Mrs. B. tells her to do her own story. She erases and starts again. 2 - Copies from chalkboard. 3 - Asks Mrs. B. Told to sound it out. 4 - Asks Mrs. B. She helps Lori Ann sound it out. 6 - Asks Mrs. B. She helps Lori Ann sound it out. 7 - Copies from chalkboard and then colors picture.</p> |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 44 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 8

Writing Episode A: Lori Ann, November 21, 1984.

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| I hav A vhs I 1 ② 3 ④ ⑤ Mat The Mves ⑥ 7 ⑧ | 2. OV 4. OV 6. IS, R, OV | 2 - Voices 'have'. 4 - Whispers each letter. 6 - Looks in reader. Lori Ann: "I'm looking for 'watch'." Krista says, "wot'." Lori Ann: "I want to find it in my reader." (She is not success- ful). Sounds out the word. |
| translation: I have a vhs. I watch the movies. | 5. RR 8. OV | 5 - Rereads 5 and 6. 8 - Voices. |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 9

Writing Episode B: Lori Ann, February 8, 1985

Summary. A review of Lori Ann's seven writing episodes indicated she was at a low developmental level according to Graves (1973). Developmental Writing Scale data leading to this determination are found in Figure 10.

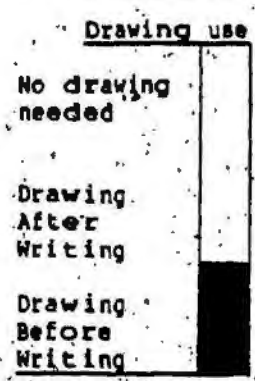
Prewriting Phase - November 22, 1984. Jerome looked around the classroom and spoke to Paula. He said, "Paula, will you lend me your book (reader)?" Jerome had lost his reader. He looked at a project about kittens done by one of the children. There was a display of projects on the bulletin board. Jerome spent about ten minutes drawing his picture and then copied his title from the project display.

Composing Phase - November 22, 1984. Throughout this phase Jerome continued to focus on the bulletin board. He frequently spoke with a friend, asking how to write a word. He took considerable time in forming the words. His work illustrated that he was not sure of his letter formation. Figure 11 and Figure 12 contain examples of Jerome's writing episodes.

Postwriting Phase - November 22, 1984. Jerome read his story to the researcher and then read it to Mrs. B.

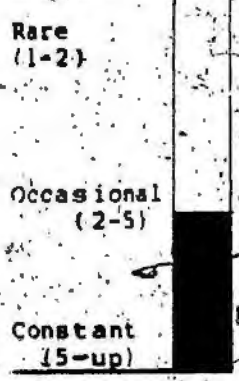
Summary. A review of Jerome's eight writing episodes revealed that he was at a low developmental level as indicated by the Developmental Writing Scale of Graves (1973).

I - Prewriting Behaviors

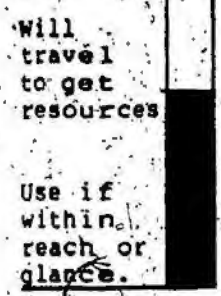


II - Composing Behaviors

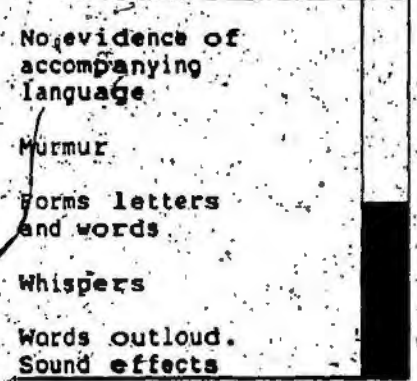
1. Rereading during writing



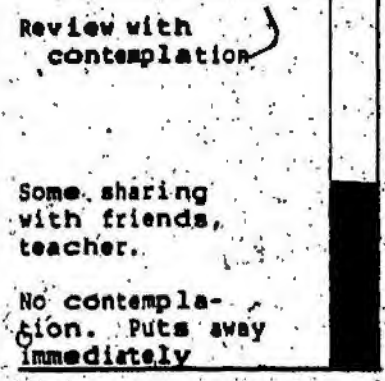
2. Resource Use



3. Overtness of Accompanying Language



III - Postwriting Behaviors



☒ - Mean Placement - Seven Writing Episodes

Figure 10

Writing Developmental Scale of Lori Ann
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

Child's Story

Accompanying Behavior

KITTEN ClawKnitting

①

②

translation:

Kittens claw knitting.

9:35

1. R, OV

- 1 - Copies from bulletin board. (Says to researcher, "Look what I did? What does it say?")
- 2 - Jerome: "Michael, how do you spell 'claw'? I don't have a book to copy off." David: "Sound it out, Jerome." Jerome asks the researcher and is told to try to get the word himself. He tries but later decides to ask Mrs. B. who spells it for him. Asks Mrs. B. 'knitting'. Jerome and Mrs. B. sound it out together. Jerome hesitates before putting down 'n'. He says, "How do you do 'n'?"

9:55

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 11

Writing Episode A: Jerome, November 22, 1984

Child's Story

Accompanying Behavior

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------|---|
| The giraffe mak | 9:55 | 1 - Asks Mrs. B. |
| ① ② ③ | 1. T, R, | 2 - Copies from chalkboard. |
| funny fas | 2. R | 3 - Asks Mrs. B. She helps him |
| ④ ⑤ | 3. T, R, OV | sound it out. |
| translation: | 3. RR | Rereads 1 - 3. |
| The giraffe makes a | 4. R, T | 4 - Copies from reader. |
| funny face. | 5. R, OV | 5 - Asks Mrs. B. They sound word together. (He sounds out but says, "I can't get the other words.") |
| 10:15 | | |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 12

Writing Episode B: Jerome, February 25, 1985

Although there was a noticeable improvement in his writing behavior from the first observation at the beginning of the study, Jerome relied on his drawing of the giraffe to help him form his ideas for his story in the February writing episode. He spent most of his time on his picture and actually wrote only three words during this episode, indicating his struggle at word level. Surprisingly, there was no indication of rereading during any of the observations of Jerome. This is in contrast to Graves' (1973) findings in that children at that level of development in his study engaged in numerous rereadings of what they are writing. At the end of the study Jerome continued to write slowly, accompanying his writing with overt language. Figure 13 contains Jerome's Developmental Writing Scale (Graves, 1973).

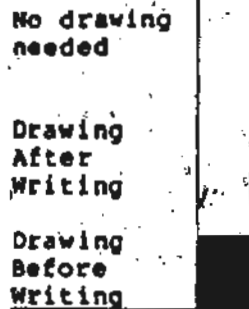
Group Two - Writing Episodes

Writing episodes in this group were indicative of children who, according to Clay's Concept About Print Test, belong the average group (stanine score of 5). The writing episodes of Kimberly and Blair which follow reflect their progress during the course of this study.

Prewriting Phase - October 31, 1984. Kimberly was given a worksheet with words that began with "M" and was asked to color the pictures that began with that letter. The worksheet had a monster for the children to color as well.

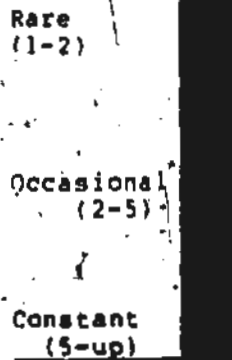
I - Prewriting Behaviors

Drawing use

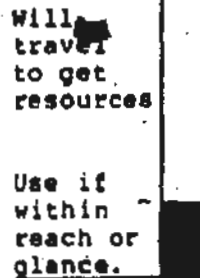


II - Composing Behaviors

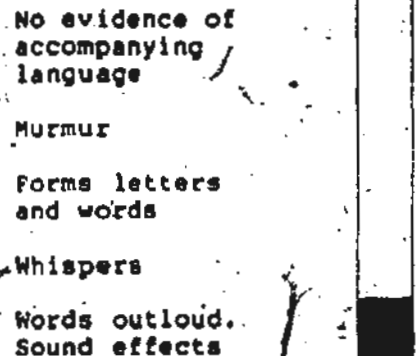
1. Rereading during writing



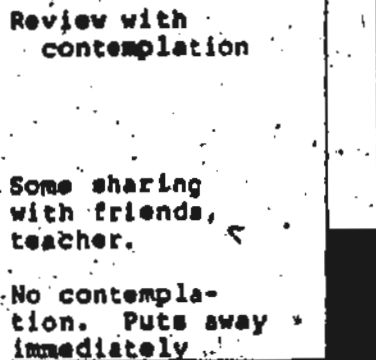
2. Resource Use



3. Overtness of Accompanying Language



III - Postwriting Behaviors



□ - Mean Placement - Eight Writing Episodes

Figure 13

Writing Developmental Scale of Jerome
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

Mrs. B. then read the book Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak and asked the class to write a monster story. Kimberly drew the picture first and then started writing.

Composing Phase - October 31, 1984. During this phase Kimberly spent a lot of time trying to sound out the words and continuously reread in an apparent effort to obtain the idea flow. The recorded behaviors are reported in Figure 14 and Figure 15.

Postwriting Phase - October 31, 1984. When Kimberly was finished writing she colored the picture and read her story to Mrs. B. Later she read her story to the class.

Summary. A summary of Kimberly's seven writing episodes suggests that Kimberly's composing speed improved during the six-month period. For example, she progressed from the point of writing twelve words in forty-five minutes during the October writing episode to the stage where she wrote fifty-nine words in the same time period during the April writing episode. She continued to use overt language to accompany her writings and reread to reorient herself to the idea flow of her writing. It was apparent to the researcher that her rereading may have slowed her composing speed since this behavior was typical of the composing process. Towards the end of the study Kimberly's writing behavior indicated that she was no longer struggling at the word level; she had a significant understanding of what she wanted to write from the beginning.

Child's Story

Accompanying Behavior

Ws a pn a T mt Thr
 ① 2 ③ ④ ⑤

Lv S M M is for
 ⑥ 7 8 8 9 10

monster.

⑪

translation:

Once upon a time there

lived some monsters. M is

for monster.

9:45

1. OV
3. RR
4. OV
5. OV
6. RR
11. R

10:30

- 1 - 3 - Voicing.
- 3 - Rereads 1 - 3.
- 4 - Voicing.
- 5 - Voicing.
- 6 - Rereads 1 - 6.
- 11 - Copies from chalkboard.

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Mumbling; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 14

Writing Episode A: Kimberly, October 30, 1984

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|---|---|
| Once upon a time ① 2 3 4 | 9:15 1. R, IS 5. RR 9. OV 13. OV, R |
| There was a sad little ⑤ 6 7 8 ⑨ | 15. RR 22. R 29. R |
| car and she name was 10 11 12 ⑬ 14 | 29. RR 49. T, OV |
| Bumpity. She liket to go ⑮ 16 17 18 19 | 43. IS, R 44. R, OV |
| To The fair. and she will 20 21 ⑳ 23 24 25 | 10:00 |
| see lat to tiges at 26 27 28 ㉑ 30 | |
| The fair and they had ㉒ 32 33 34 35 | |
| lot of fun and they 36 37 38 39 40 | |
| good boy same is cren 41 42 ㉓ ㉔ 45 | |
| and after they good 46 47 48 ㉕ | |
| go sweming and they 50 51 52 53 | |
| good Teh Bumpity how 54 55 56 57 | |
| to sweming. 58 59 | |

1 - Copies 1 - 5 from reader.

5 - Rereads 1 - 5.

9 - Voices.

13 - Voices name then goes back to her previous stories and finds word.

15 - Rereads 1 - 15.

22 - Copies from chalkboard.

29 - Asks Tina 'things'. Tina says, 'tigs', that's the way I sound it out. Blair says, "No, that's not right. You want things put a 's' on it."

29 - Rereads 16 - 29.

49 - Asks Mrs. B., both try sounding it out. Writes c. Tina says, "two o's."

43 - Copies from reader.

44 - Asks Mrs. B. Both try sounding it out.

translation:

Once upon a time
there was a sad little
car and her name was
Bumpity. She liked to go
to the fair and she will
see lots of things at
the fair and they had
lots of fun and they
could buy some ice cream
and after they could
go swimming and they
could teach Bumpity how
to swim.

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; ④ - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use.
Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 15

Writing Mode B: Kimberly, April 28, 1983

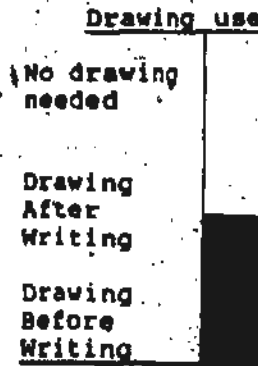
Figure 16 illustrates Kimberly's eventual development of control over the writing process. Data generated through her writing episodes suggest she was at the average level of development according to Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale (see Figure 16).

Prewriting Phase - November 28, 1984. As part of his reading, Blair was asked to look at five pictures of playful kittens in his reading workbook. He was asked to choose the picture he liked best and write a story about it. During this phase Blair talked to Kimberly about what picture she was going to write about. He spent approximately ten minutes looking at the workbook and drawing his picture.

Composing Phase - November 28, 1984. Like Kimberly, Blair spent a lot of time sounding out the words. His looking at the picture though, indicated he relied on his drawing to a great extent to help him understand what he wanted to write about. Blair stopped writing after step seven. After he discussed his story with Mrs. B. he was able to continue writing. During this episode it appeared that he was struggling at the word level. Although he didn't reread what he had written, he used overt language. The behaviors accompanying his composing process are tabulated in Figure 17 and Figure 18.

Postwriting Phase - November 28, 1984. Blair put his workbook in his seat and went to Mrs. B. and read his story to her.

I - Prewriting Behaviors

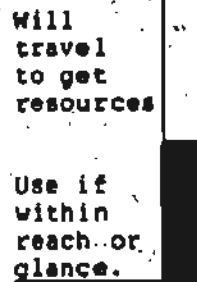


II - Composing Behaviors

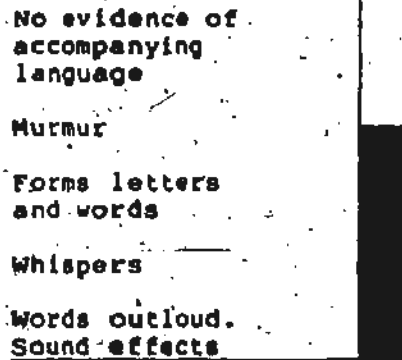
1. Rereading during writing



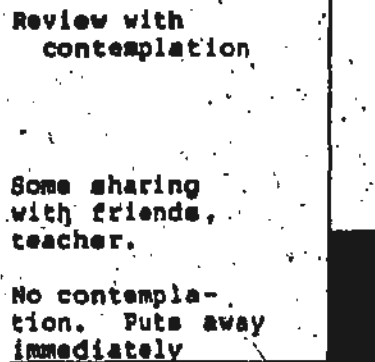
2. Resource Use



3. Overtness of Accompanying Language



III - Postwriting Behaviors



□ - Mean Placement - Seven Writing Episodes

Figure 16

Writing Developmental Scale of Kimberly
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

Child's Story

Accompanying Behavior

thes kitten is
1 (2) 3

KLiMne io a
(4) (5) 6

hre wef hes
(7) (8) (9)

Klies
10

translation:

This kitten is climbing

up a tree with his

claws.

10:50

2. R
4. OV
5. OV
7. OV
7. IS

8. ///
9. OV
10. 11:10

2 - Copies from workbook.

4 - Voicing.

5 - Voicing.

7 - Voicing.

7 - Rereads 1 - 7 and then stops, goes to Mrs. B. and reads his story. Mrs. B. says, "What happened when he climbed the tree?" Blair replies, "He dug in his claws." He returns to his seat and writes 'yef' for 'with'. Mrs. B. says, "'with' begins with 'w'." Blair erases 'y'. Craig says, "I get mixed up with 'w' and 'y' too, Blair."

8 - Erased.

9 - Voicing 9 and 10.

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; ///
- Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Mumbling; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 17

Writing Episode A: Blair, November 28, 1984

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bumpity's Picnic | 9:30 |
| 1 | 4. IS, R |
| 2 | |
| Once upon a time Bumpity | 8. R |
| 3 4 5 6 7 | 11. /// |
| and his friends went out | 16. IS |
| 8 9 10 11 12 | 20. OV |
| in woods and had a picnic | 24. OV |
| 13 14 15 16 17 18 | 34. /// |
| wanted to go to the fair | 10:05 |
| 19 20 21 22 | |
| but they tried and a way | |
| 23 24 25 26 27 28 | |
| they went everywhere | |
| 29 30 31 32 | |
| but we soon never | |
| 33 34 35 36 | |
| so we gave up. The | |
| 37 38 39 40 | |
| End. | |
| 41 42 43 | |
| 44 45 46 | |
| 47 48 49 | |
| 50 51 52 53 54 | |
| 55 | |

translation:

Bumpity's Picnic
Once upon a time Bumpity
and his friends went out in
the woods and had a picnic.
When they were finished they
wanted to go to the fair but
never knew where it was.
But they tried and a way.
They went everywhere
but we soon never
so we gave up. The
End.

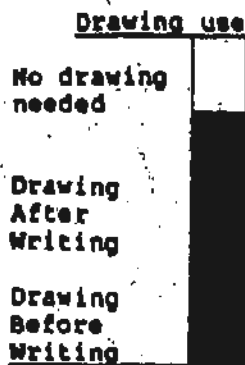
KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; IS - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 18

Writing Episode 3: Blair, April 24, 1983

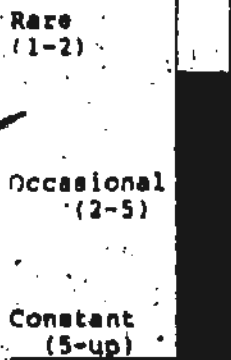
Blair's writing process development was noteworthy to both the researcher and Mrs. B. Towards the beginning of March it appeared that Blair began to feel more comfortable with invented spelling and began to write stories of much greater length. On March 14, 1985, he wrote a story called The Lost Bear which was twenty pages in length. Mrs. B. reported that Blair continued writing through recess and most of that day. At the beginning of the study Blair seemed very concerned about correct spelling and hesitated before writing. He was overheard commenting, "Now, what can I write today?" and "I don't know what to write." Somehow during the development of the writing process he appeared to gain confidence in his writing ability and went beyond the difficult task of recognizing sound-symbol relationships. His composing speed increased significantly from March onward. His composing speed increased from the point of writing ten words in twenty minutes during the November writing episode to writing fifty-five words in thirty-five minutes during the April writing episode. Appendix C contains a copy of Blair's surprising story. During several writing episodes after March, Blair did not see drawing as an important part of his composing process. He wrote rapidly, without using overt language. A review of Blair's seven writing episodes indicates he is at the high level of development according to Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale. This finding is reported in Figure 19.

I - Prewriting Behaviors

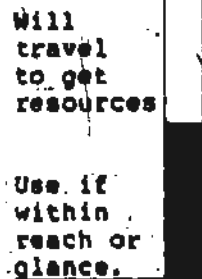


II - Composing Behaviors

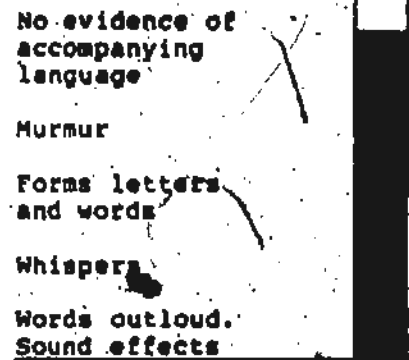
1. Rereading during writing



2. Resource Use



3. Overtness of Accompanying Language



III - Postwriting Behaviors

Review with contemplation

Some sharing with friends, teacher.

No contemplation. Puts away immediately

□ - Mean Placement - Seven Writing Episodes

Figure 19

Writing Developmental Scale of Blair
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

Group Three - Writing Episodes

Writing episodes in this group were characteristic of the advanced level or the above average stanine of 5 according to Marie Clay's "Concept of Print" Test (1979).

Prewriting Phase - November 22, 1984. Paula was asked to close her eyes and think about Candy's kittens. They had just finished talking about the fact that Candy had kittens. This was described in a story they had just finished reading. Paula did not draw before writing her story; she began writing her story immediately.

Composing Phase - November 22, 1984. Paula wrote rapidly without overt language. She was proficient with invented spelling and used this knowledge to obtain a rapid idea flow.

Postwriting Phase - November 22, 1984. Paula read her story to Mrs. B. and proceeded to draw her picture.

Summary: A review of Paula's seven writing episodes indicates that there was no need for her to engage in overt language. There was very little evidence of rereading or of struggling at the word level. From the beginning of the investigation her early spelling strategies demonstrated that she had mastered some conventions of sound-symbol relationships. Figures 20 and 21 in part contain examples of Paula's attempts at invented spelling. Toward the end of this investigation Paula's writing episodes reflect closer approximations to conventional spelling.

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | 9:30 |
| Kittens are soft. | 1. R |
| ① ② 3 | 2-19. S |
| And kittens like to | 1 - Copies from reader. |
| 4 5 6 7 | 2 - 19 - Proceeds at a rapid pace. |
| | Very quiet, no voicing of words. |
| | 9:45 |
| Dink milk And kittens | |
| 8 9 10 11 | |
| get into tor bel And tay | |
| 12 13 14 15 16 | |
| paly with Yany. | |
| 17 18 19 | |
| translation: | |
| Kittens are soft. And kittens | |
| like to drink milk. And | |
| kittens get into trouble. | |
| And they play with Candy. | |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 20.

Writing Episode A: Paula, November 22, 1984

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|---|-----------------------|
| My Giraffe | |
| 1 2 | |
| I saw a Giraffe in Toronto | 8. R |
| 3 4 5 6 7 8 | 23. IS |
| when I was a baby and I | 76. R |
| 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 | |
| Patd it like a dog and I | |
| 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 | |
| laphd and I had a lot of | |
| 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 | |
| fun And I bood a Book | |
| 30 31 32 33 34 35 | |
| Abot Giraffes And Giraffes | |
| 36 37 38 39 | |
| can be funny And Giraffes | |
| 40 41 42 43 44 | |
| are tall And I Like Giraffes | |
| 45 46 47 48 49 50 | |
| cus they are nice | |
| 51 52 53 54 | |
| And they have lots And lots | |
| 55 56 57 58 59 60 | |
| of spots And in Books Giraffes | |
| 61 62 63 64 65 66 | |
| can wiche TV and Play | |
| 67 68 69 70 71 | |
| foot ball And Do funny | |
| 72 73 74 75 | |
| things thats way I like them | |
| 76 77 78 79 80 81 | |
| and they can play wich toys | |
| 82 83 84 85 86 87 | |
| And My Giraffes name is | |
| 88 89 90 91 92 | |
| funny The - and | |
| 93 94 95 | |
| translation: | |
| I saw a giraffe in Toronto, when I was | |
| a baby and I played with it like a dog | |
| and I laughed and I had a lot of | |
| fun. And I bought a book about giraffes. | |
| And giraffes can be funny. And giraffes | |
| are tall. And I like giraffes cause they | |
| are nice. And they have lots and lots of | |
| spots. And in books giraffes can watch TV | |
| and play football and do funny things. | |
| That's why I like them. And they can play | |
| with toys and my giraffe's name is Funny. | |
| The End. | |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 5 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource used; AL - Accompanying Language; OV - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; B - No overt language visible.

Figure 21.

Writing Episode B: Paula, February 23, 1983

Paula's writing behavior places her high on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale which is represented in Figure 22.

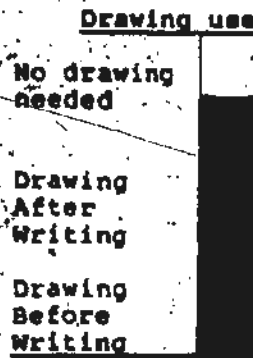
Prewriting Phase - December 12, 1984. Since the children were excited about Christmas, Mrs. B. asked them to close their eyes and think about what Christmas meant. A lengthy discussion followed, eliciting various ideas for story writing. Mrs. B. then read a story about the real meaning of Christmas from The Book of Bible Stories. For this story David was asked to write about what Christmas meant to him. He began writing the story immediately.

Composing Phase - December 12, 1984. David wrote rapidly without much overt language. The writing was fluent, reflecting well developed prewriting idea structure. Early in the first grade David used correct punctuation and had a sense of paragraphing. David's attempts to use punctuation and to organize his thoughts in paragraph form can be seen in Figures 23 and 24.

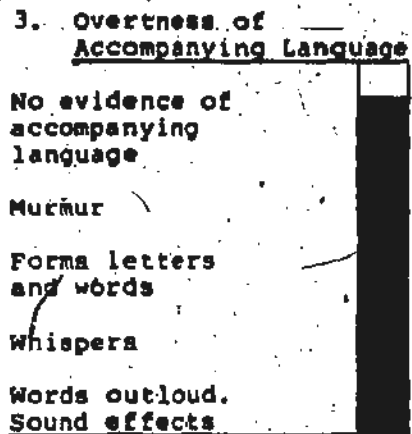
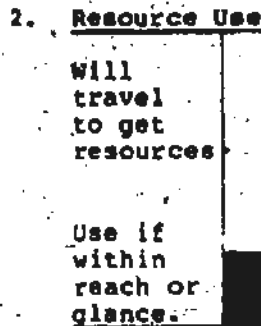
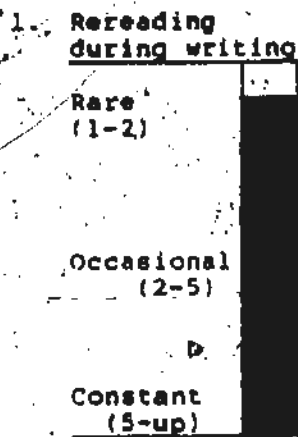
Postwriting Phase - December 12, 1984. David drew his picture and then read his story to Mrs. B.

A review of David's eight writing episodes indicates he was at the high average level of the Developmental Writing Scale according to Graves (1973). This finding is reported in Figure 25. David's writing episodes throughout demonstrate a well developed knowledge of the conventions of writing. Like Paula, his ability to use invented spelling enabled him to approximate conventional spelling.

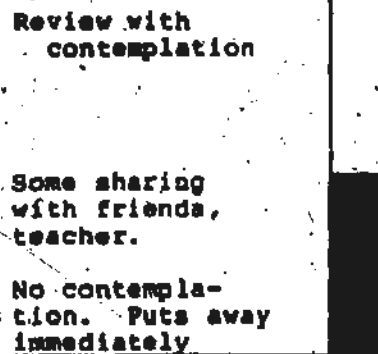
I - Prewriting Behaviors



II - Composing Behaviors



III - Postwriting Behaviors



☐ - Mean Placement - Seven Writing Episodes

Figure 22

Writing Developmental Scale of Paula
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Christmas ① | 1. R | 1 - Copies from chart. |
| Christmas is when 2 3 ④ | 4. ///, IS R | 4 - Erases, stops and says, "Some words may be in your reader." David looks through reader. Asks Mrs. B. She tells him 'when' is on the chalkboard. |
| the Chist was born. 5 6 7 8 | 14. IS, RR | 14 - Stops, rereads story putting in periods. |
| You get presents. 9 10 11 | 15. /// 19. /// 24. ///, IS | 15 - Erases 'thr' and writes 'ther'. 19 - Erases. 24 - Erases and asks Mrs. B. Mrs. B.: "Sound it out, David." He says, "'nigt'." Mrs. B.: "'night'." |
| Christmas is fun. 12 13 ⑭ | | |
| ther was a big star ⑮ 16 17 18 ⑲ | | |
| in the sky one night. 20 21 22 23 ⑳ | | |
| translation: | | |
| Christmas | | |
| Christmas is when | | |
| the Christ was born. | | |
| You get presents. | | |
| Christmas is fun. | | |
| There was a big star | | |
| in the sky one night. | | |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RR - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use. Accompanying Language: O - Overt; WH - Whispering; P - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 23

Writing Episode A: David, December 12, 1984

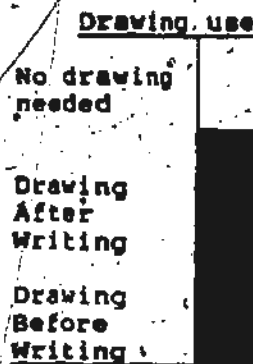
| Child's Story | Accompanying Behavior |
|---|--|
| <p>Lions</p> <p>1. This is a Daddy Lion</p> <p>2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>7 with his cub the cubs</p> <p>8 9 10 11</p> <p>12 mommy is gone hunting</p> <p>13 14 15</p> <p>16 with a group.</p> <p>17 18</p> <p>19 Lions can be</p> <p>20 21</p> <p>22 found in zoos.</p> <p>23 24</p> <p>25 Lions part two</p> <p>26 27</p> <p>28 Lions can also be</p> <p>29 30 31</p> <p>32 found in Jungles. The end</p> <p>33 34 35 36</p> <p>37 tigers. tigers are like</p> <p>38 39 40</p> <p>41 the Lions but they have</p> <p>42 43 44 45</p> <p>46 strips and the Daddys</p> <p>47 48 49</p> <p>50 have no mane. tigers can</p> <p>51 52 53 54</p> <p>55 be found in zoos.</p> <p>56 57 58</p> <p>translation:</p> <p>Lions</p> <p>This is a Daddy Lion</p> <p>with his cub. The cub's</p> <p>mommy is gone hunting</p> <p>with a group.</p> <p>Lions can be</p> <p>found in zoos.</p> <p>Lions - Part Two</p> <p>Lions can also be</p> <p>found in Jungles. The End.</p> <p>Tigers. Tigers are like</p> <p>the Lions but they have</p> <p>stripes and the Daddys</p> <p>have no mane. Tigers can</p> <p>be found in zoos.</p> | <p>1. R</p> <p>5. ///</p> <p>1 - Copies title.</p> <p>5 - Erases 'D'.</p> <p>6 - 58 - Finishes story quietly, no sounding of words, works independently.</p> |

KEY: 1-2-3-4 - Numerals indicate writing sequence; 4 - Item explained in comment column on the right; /// - Erasure; T - Teacher involvement; IS - Interruption Solicited; IU - Interruption Unsolicited; RA - Reread; DR - Works on Drawing; R - Resource use; Accompanying Language: O - Overt; WH - Whispering; F - Forms letters and words; M - Murmuring; S - No overt language visible.

Figure 24

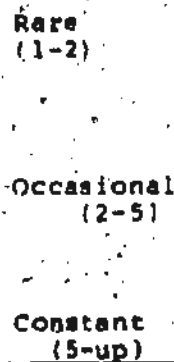
Writing Episode B: David, February 28, 1985

I - Prewriting Behaviors

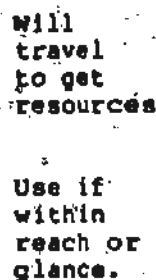


II - Composing Behaviors

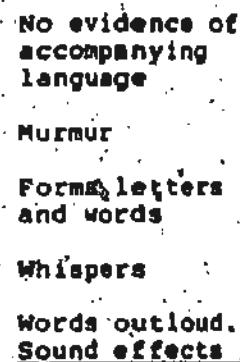
1. Rereading during writing



2. Resource Use



3. Overtness of Accompanying Language



III - Postwriting Behaviors

Review with contemplation

Some sharing with friends, teacher.

No contemplation. Puts away immediately

□ - Mean Placement - Eight Writing Episodes

Figure 25

Writing Developmental Scale of David
adapted from Graves (1973, p. 101)

Summary

In the present study the two children from the high average group, selected on the basis of Clay's Concept About Print Test (1979), used well-developed writing and spelling abilities. David and Paula used combinations of conventional spelling, invented spelling and some correct punctuation. Blair and Kimberly from the group of children who represent the average stanine of 5 according to Clay's Concept About Print Test experimented with sounds, letters and letter combinations. Both children's writing process development showed improvement during the course of the study. Lori Ann and Jerome belonged to the group of children who were below the average stanine of 5 (Clay's Concept of Print Test, 1979). They seemed limited in their expressive ability at the beginning of the study. However, they showed that they had acquired a conscious knowledge of sound-symbol relationships and were learning to develop control over the writing process.

Phase III The Written Products

In Phase III the research reported on the selected group of six children with regard to their concept of message and related concepts of directionality and spacing as discussed by King and Rentel (1981). The concept of message categories, previously discussed in Chapter III, differentiated between

children with no or little understanding (picture carries message), a vague global understanding (letter strings), the ability to copy or construct limited repetitious message (copied or invented patterns) and the ability to construct an original and varied "readable" message. The researcher analyzed mid-monthly one sample writing of the selected six children from October 1984 to April 1985 and classified them into the categories developed by King and Rentel (1981).


Concept of Message Categories

The following examples illustrate the range of development in the six children's concept of message as revealed by their writings. They further illustrate how the writings were classified into the categories previously discussed.

Figure 26 represented number three of the concept of message categories (letter and/or number strings and message from print only in a global sense). The first three words, "thanks", "pilgrims" and "America", are discernable, but the writer appears to have a vague idea of the message he constructed.

Figure 27 and Figure 28 represented number four of the concept of message categories (copied, repeated a pattern [for example, "I love ...", "My dog is nice", "My dog is good . . ."]. Assume these are original [5 below] unless strong evidence for actual copying). These examples suggest

th dms
America
Izforvou




translation:

Thanks
Pilgrims
America
Izforvou

Figure 26

Example of Number 3 of the
Concept of Message Categories

that the children may have been influenced by the style of writing in their basal readers or may have repeated the pattern for the fun of repetition. It appears that the children were using Clay's recurring principle (spontaneously repeating certain forms) and the flexibility principle (able to vary forms). Using a limited repertoire of writing behavior, both children repeated some simple word groups with one element varied in each sentence.



I like making snowmen
I like going to Walt Disney
I like Walt Disney

translation:

I like making snowmen.
I like going to Walt Disney.
I like Walt Disney.

Figure 27

Example of Number 4-A of the
Concept of Message Categories

The funny from:

we have ever on a family
farm I wonder what it
is like. Some animals sound
funny. A horse is on a farm.
A cow is on a farm. A dog is
on a farm. A cat is on a farm.



A chicken is on a farm.
A lamb is on a farm.
A duck is on a farm.
A pig is on a farm.
A calf is on a farm. A silo is on
a farm. A goat is on a farm.
A colt is on a farm.



A wagon is on a farm.
A barn is on a farm.
A truck is on a farm.
A tractor is on a farm.
An apple is on a farm.
Sheep is on a farm.
Eggs are on a farm.
Hay is on a farm.

translation:

The Funny Farm.

Were you ever on a funny
farm? I wonder what it
is like? Some animals sound
funny. A horse is on a farm.

A cow is on a farm. A dog is
on a farm. A cat is on a farm.

A chicken is on a farm.

A lamb is on a farm.

A duck is on a farm.

A pig is on a farm.

A calf is on a farm. A silo is on
a farm. A goat is on a farm.

A colt is on a farm.

A wagon is on a farm.

A barn is on a farm.

A truck is on a farm.

A tractor is on a farm.

An apple is on a farm.

Sheep is on a farm.

Eggs are on a farm.

Hay is on a farm.

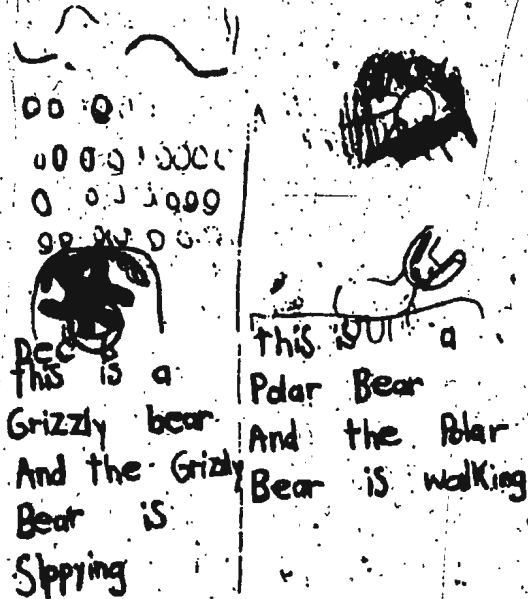
Figure 28

Example of Number 4-B of the
Concept of Message Categories

Another child's writing demonstrates the contrastive principle of Clay's previously discussed in Chapter II. This can be seen in Figures 29 and 30 which are examples of number six of the concept of message categories (piece of writing in which fairly original and varied phrases and/or sentences are used to convey message. Writing may or may not include conventional punctuation, capitalization or spelling. Length and ideas may vary considerably). In Figure 29 the child divided the page in half and compared the grizzly bear and the polar bear. In Figure 30, after hearing the book The Penguin Who Hated The Cold, the same child compared Pablo's igloo in the cold Anarctic with his new house of sticks in a warm land. The drawing was divided into two scenes similar to those illustrated in the book used as a motivator.

The researcher included Figures 31, 32 and 33 from number six concept of message category as examples of varying natural language. While these examples are different from each other in length and complexity, the writers of all three examples used original and varied written phrases to convey a unique message.

Analysis of the written products collected October 15, November 15, December 15, January 15, February 15, March 15 and April 15 during the study revealed that five of the selected six children were in number six of the concept of message categories.



translation

This is a

grizzly bear

and the grizzly

bear is

sleeping.

This is a

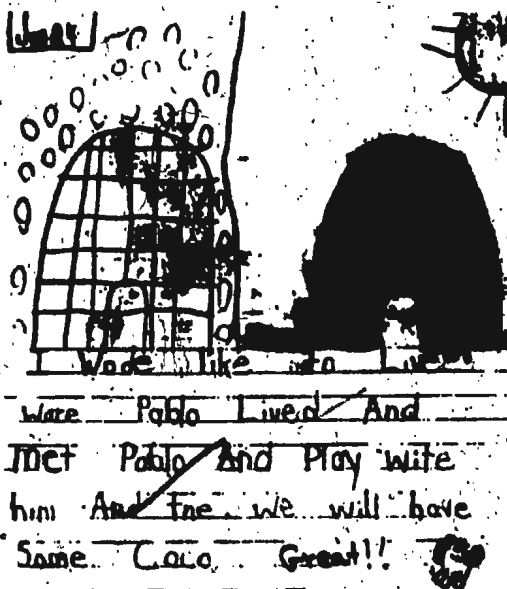
polar bear

and the polar

bear is walking.

Figure 29

Example of Number 6-A of the
Concept of Message Categories
(Contrastive Principle)



translation:

I would like to live

where Pablo lived and

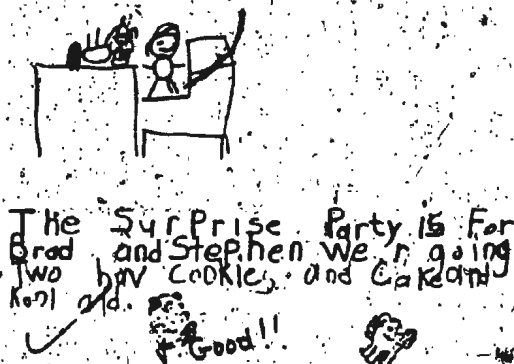
meet Pablo and play with

him and then we will have

some cocoa.

Figure 30

Example of Number 6-B of the
Concept of Message Categories

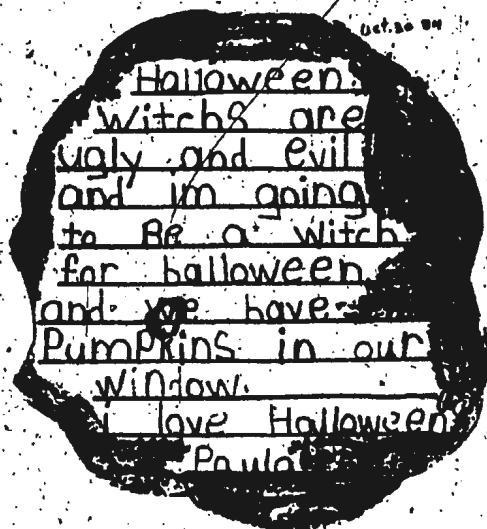


translation:

The surprise party is for
Brad and Stephen. We are going
to have cookies and cake and
kool-aid.

Figure 31

Example of Number 6-C of the
Concept of Message Categories



translation:

Halloween
witches are
ugly and evil
and I'm going
to be a witch
for Halloween.
And we have
pumpkins in our
window.

I love Halloween.

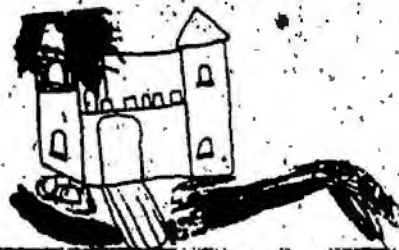
Paula

Figure 32

Example of Number 6-D of the
Concept of Message Categories

The sad princess.

Once upon a time there was a castle and in that castle there was a King and he had a princess and she was always sad. She cried and



cried day and night.

She wouldn't stop she

~~went~~ on and on and

one day the king had

an announcement to make.

The announcement said

Someone in the Kingdom

must stop her from crying

forever said the king angrily.

They tried and tried but nothing

could be done. Years passed.

Then one day a handsome young

prince came riding through

the forest and stopped at

the castle that day

and found the princess

crying. He loved her so

much he bent down

and kissed her and

she stopped crying. She went

down stairs and married.

translation:

The Sad Princess

Once upon a time there

was a castle and in

that castle there was

a king and he had a

princess and she was

always sad. She cried and

cried day and night.

She wouldn't stop, she

went on and on and

one day the king had

an announcement to make.

The announcement said

"Someone in the kingdom

must stop her from crying

forever," said the king angrily.

They tried and tried but nothing

could be done. Years passed.

Then one day a handsome young

prince came riding through

the forest and stopped at

the castle that day

and found the princess

crying. He loved her so

much he bent down

everyone what the prince
did and the very very next
day they got married and
lived happily ever after

Excellent story, David!!



and kissed her and
she stopped crying. She went
downstairs and showed
everyone what the prince
did and the very very next
day they got married and
lived happily ever after.

Figure 33.

Example of Number 6-E of the
Concept of Message Categories

Over seven observations one child, Jerome, fluctuated between number three concept of message category and number six concept of message category. In several of his written products only some of the words were actually discernable and a single phrase was used to convey the message. On a few occasions there was strong evidence that the messages were copied either from a reader, a chart on the bulletin board or from the writing of a fellow student. Jerome's Concept of Message Categories are summarized in Table 3.

Spacing and Directionality Categories

The children in this study were generally successful in mastering the conventions of spacing and directionality. At the beginning of the study they were told to use their finger to help them space their words. The patterns of left-right directionality were consistent over the duration

of the study. It appears that directionality was mastered in kindergarten by all of the students.

Results of Syntactic Development

Research by Loban (1976) and others has established the fact that elaboration and complexity of syntax are clearly a measure of development in written language. An examination of the six selected children's written products at the beginning of Phase II, the fourth week of the study, and at the end of Phase II, the twenty-third week in the study, revealed clearly an increase in their communication units. As can be seen in Table 4, the average number of words per communication unit showed a substantial growth for all students. The full analysis of the syntactic development is presented in Appendix B.

Jerome did not show evidence of an increase in communication units; however, at the end of Phase II he had increased the number of words per communication unit. Of all the students, Blair showed the greatest increase in both communication units and average number of words per communication unit. Both Paula and David showed a substantial increase in the number of communication units. A detailed analysis of the communication unit can be found in Appendix B.

Table 3

A Summary of Jerome's Concept of
Message Categories

| Ratings | Observations | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| | 1 October | 2 November | 3 December | 4 January | 5 February | 6 March | 7 April |
| 0 Picture Only | | | | | | | |
| 1 Letter strings, Message from picture | | | | | | | |
| 2 Letter strings, Global message | | | | | | | |
| 3 Letter strings, Specific matches | | X | | | | X | |
| 4 Repeated patterns copied | | | | | | | |
| 5 Repeated patterns invented | | | X | X | X | | X |
| 6 Original matched message | X | | | | | | |

Table 4

A Summary of Data on Syntactic Development

| Student | Number of Communication Units | | Average Number of Words Per Communication Unit | |
|----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Beginning (November 1, 1984) | End (April 17, 1985) | Beginning (November 1, 1984) | End (April 17, 1985) |
| David | 3 | 16 | 4.33 | 5.88 |
| Paula | 3 | 14 | 8.33 | 8.99 |
| Blair | 2 | 17 | 4.50 | 9.41 |
| Kimberly | 1 | 4 | 8.00 | 9.50 |
| Jerome | 1 | 1 | 5.00 | 11.00 |
| Lori Ann | 1 | 5 | 6.00 | 11.60 |

Summary

The three categories concerning concepts of message, directionality and spacing reflected particular dimensions of the children's understanding of these three conventions of print. All students reflected understanding of these conventions with the exception of Jerome. It appears that his concept of message was not yet well developed. All students showed a substantial growth in the length of the communication unit and five students displayed an increase in the number of the units.

Phase IV
Children's Views About Writing

In order to gain an emerging profile of their concept of the good writer and writing in general, the twenty-seven children involved in this investigation were asked the following questions:

Part A: What do you think you need to be able to do in order to write good stories?

Part B: Why do you think it is important to write stories?

At times the researcher had to rephrase the questions to ensure the children at this age level understood. Each child was interviewed individually and responses were tape recorded on April 24, 1985.

The Knowledge of Writing Question

The children's knowledge of writing was measured by finding categorical behaviors in their responses. A summary of the responses to the first question is contained in Table 5. The full statements given by the children are found in Appendix D. Approximately forty-six per cent of the class were concerned about knowing a lot of words and approximately forty-two per cent of the class were concerned about being able to think and organize their thoughts. It was surprising that only nineteen per cent of the class believed they should be able to sound out words when, in fact, this approach was stressed by Mrs. B. for the duration of the study.

The Purpose of Writing Question

The children viewed the purpose of writing in a variety of ways (see Table 6). In four cases children said that they wrote because it was fun. Nine children presented a specific purpose for writing (for example, "To learn things, like you learn how to spell words and sound them out", and "Ah, to learn. So you ... when you get bigger you know what to get in groceries." In four cases children said they wrote stories for an audience (for example, "So your teacher can hear them and so you can bring your book home and your mom can hear them, and dad and your nanny and poppy").

Table 5

Knowledge of Writing Categories

| Categories | Number of Subjects |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Page Layout</u> | |
| Penmanship | X X X X X |
| Neatness | X |
| <u>Skills</u> | |
| Be able to draw well | X X X |
| <u>Communication Unit</u> | |
| Know letters | X X |
| Know words | X X X X X X X X X X X |
| Sound out words | X X X X X |
| <u>Organization</u> | |
| Must think before write | X X X X X X X X X X |
| Have a good title | X |
| <u>Characterization</u> | |
| Tell how a person feels | X |
| <u>Content and Idea Flow</u> | |
| Know how to make it up | X X X X X |
| Know your content | X X X |
| Have lot of stories in your head | X X X X |
| No response | X |

Table 6
Purpose of Writing

| Categories | Number of Subjects |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Could not verbalize a purpose | X X X X X X X |
| Writing as a way to acquire knowledge | X X X X X X X X X |
| Writing as a pleasure | X X X X |
| Writing for an audience | X X X X |
| Writing as a way to develop skills | X X X |

In three cases children said writing stories helped them practise skills (for example, "So you learn words and your letters" and "To learn to write"). One child thought about the question for a while and responded "So you won't get bored." Seven of the twenty-seven children found it difficult to verbalize a response to this question since the question required children to reflect on their writing experiences.

Summary

The knowledge of writing question revealed that a major concern of the students involved the communication unit (knowing the words) and organization (thinking before writing). The main purpose for writing was seen as a way to acquire knowledge.

Phase V A Case Study - Paula

Observations of Paula began in October and continued through April of grade one. It seemed that Paula demonstrated more knowledge or control over her written expression than any other student. From the beginning of the study Paula enjoyed experimenting with language, inventing spellings and presenting a message. Her complexity of written units increased from three communication units to sixteen different units at the end of the study.

Background

Paula was characterized by her teacher as a capable grade-one student. She was a happy, confident child who rarely needed assistance while writing her stories. Occasionally she solicited help, copied words from the chalkboard and encoded more than ninety percent of her words independently. Because Paula's teacher directed her to write stories on her own and to spell the words independently, Paula became a successful writer.

Paula's kindergarten teacher disclosed that she was not reading when she entered kindergarten; but because of her interest, about halfway through that year she was reading on her own. Mrs. H., her kindergarten teacher, explained that children are encouraged to read, attempt to draw pictures and begin writing stories in her class.

During Phase III an interview was conducted at Paula's home. Paula's mother, Mrs. H., was interviewed April 26, 1985 - a transcript of the interview is contained in Appendix E. Mrs. H. revealed that Paula was always interested in books. She liked being read to when she was younger; and presently Paula often sits on the chesterfield chair with Gregory, her younger brother, and Leslie Ann, her sister, reading to them.

Paula, at six, is the eldest of three children. Leslie Ann is three years old and Gregory is seventeen months

old. Her mother worked as a secretary for sixteen months when Paula was two and a half and, except for this period, she has remained at home. Paula's father is employed with the provincial government and was at work during the time of the interview.

From viewing the contents of Paula's desk at home, it was clear that Paula's environment was abundant with print. Coloring books, activity books, puzzles and crafts that she owned before she went to school were kept in her desk. There was also a picture she had drawn of Mrs. H. carrying Gregory in the womb. There were in her closet numerous books, games, tapes, a tape recorder and a puppet stage she had made.

During the interview Mrs. H. was able to recognize the source of many of Paula's writing themes. The researcher brought Paula's writing books from school and had Mrs. H. comment about anything she thought was significant. Mrs. H. was able to read all of her invented spellings and remarked that her spelling had improved by the end of the study. The source of many of Paula's writings appeared to be from her daily life, her actual experiences with her family and her friends at school.

First Grade: October to April

Since two of Paula's writing episodes and her developmental scale have already been discussed in this chapter, some of

the remaining numerous pieces of writing that grew out of the on-going curriculum will be reported with emphasis on the classroom events that surrounded her writing.

The first observation, October 18, 1984, revealed that Paula had started writing by using invented spellings. This enabled her to write freely from the beginning without much interruption on her flow of ideas. On the previous day the class had visited the Arts and Culture Centre to see the children's singer and performer, Fred Penner. A discussion revealed what each child enjoyed the most about the performance. The class sang many of the songs from the concert such as "Red Rooster", "Marvelous Little Toy" and "Goblin". After a lengthy discussion Mrs. B. said, "What do you think we are going to do next?" The class responded, "Write a story about it." Paula wrote many of the words, quickly vocalizing the following invented ones: sag - sang; ez - easy; cld - called; ths - this; odd - old; pd - played; rll - real; cs - cause; ovr - our and rcd - record. Saying the sounds that made up the words she wanted to write was the approach she appeared to be using (see Figure 34).

A writing episode produced three months later in Figure 35 showed considerably more control over the writing process. The spellings are more conventional in appearance. Some of the more difficult words were provided by Mrs. B.



Fred is A good Singer
And He Sang A ez Sing
And it was tild ths
Oad Man He Pd I
And it was Rll ez
CS we got it on
OWA Rcd And we had
bts OF fun

translation:

Fred is a good singer
and he sang an easy song.
And it was called "This
Old Man He Played One"
and it was real easy
cause we got it on
our record. And we
had lots of fun.

Figure 34

Writing Episode 1 of Paula
October 18, 1984



Dec 13 We wat to St
Lukes Home And we saw
Some old People And we
Song christmas carols
And the old people, Clapped

translation:

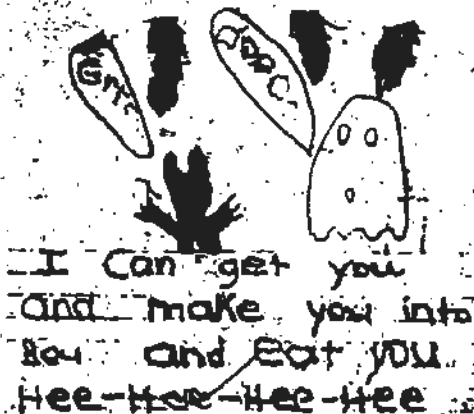
December 13 we went to St.
Luke's Home and we saw
some old people and we
sang Christmas carols
And the old people clapped.

Figure 35

Writing Episode 2 of Paula
December 13, 1984

Except for "carols" and "clapped" which she sounded out, the majority of words were spelled correctly. This story was similar to that of October 18, 1984, in that it was written after the class had returned from a visit to St. Luke's Nursing Home. Again a lengthy discussion preceded the writing. The children were asked to draw their picture first and then write a story about their visit. Paula on this occasion decided to write her story first.

A month later there were several important observations to be noted about her writing episode (see Figure 36).



translation:

I can get you
and make you into
boo and eat you.
Hee-Hee-Hee-Hee.

Figure 36

Writing Episode 3 of Paula
January 23, 1985

The topic of discussion, on this occasion, was scary stories. Paula proceeded to draw her picture first. Her drawing showed considerable detail for a grade one student. There was no evidence of vocalization; Paula wrote quietly and independently. After twenty minutes, Paula appeared to have finished her story. However, she began erasing all of

the print. The researcher intervened to ask why this action was necessary and she replied, "I want to do my story again to make the words look scary." Paula proceeded to change the appearance of the print to make the words look spooky in tune with her drawing. All of the words in this episode except "bou - boo" are spelled conventionally. It seems she has used capital letters for emphasizing the importance of "Bou" and "Hee-Hee-Hee-Hee." This episode may suggest the importance of allowing the child to experiment as a user of written language.

A little later the same month, January 31, 1985, Paula demonstrated her ability to use subordinate clauses, conjunctions, the possessive and a variety of verbs along with pronoun reference to achieve a unified story. In Figure 37 her writing continued to be expressive, reflecting her attempt to portray an experience from a personal point of view. During this occasion Paula had made a puppet on the previous day and was asked to think about a name for her puppet and tell about what her special puppet can do. Once the stories were completed Paula and her classmates held up their puppets at the puppet stage and shared each story with everyone.

From February to the end of the study Paula's writing showed a gradual increase in the amount of description.



My puppet's name is Paula
Cuz it got a brownie
Duss on And She is Mouse
Mase Cuz She Can fly
And She is nice And I
Like her the end

translation:

My puppet's name is Paula
cause it got a brownie
dress on and she is Mighty
Mouse cause she can fly
and she is nice and I
like her. The End.

Figure 37

Writing Episode 4 of Paula
January 31, 1985

However, egocentrism remained in that she seemed not to take into account her audience. In Figure 38 Paula had changed from the first person as she was caught up in the general enthusiasm of the class.

Additionally, at this point other changes were noted in Paula's writing output. The amount of her writing increased significantly. This change continued throughout the study. Apart from increase in length, Paula used a more formal beginning, gave setting information, used action and a final event or ending. Her writings demonstrated that Paula had become sensitive to the elements of story and story language (Figure 39).

Education Week March 7
 Education week is a
 special week cuz you do
 lots of things in
 Kindergarten we has to
 bring dolls from other
 lands And in grade one



We made Posters of
 Polluting And Not Polluting
 And we say I Care
 cuz we are wearing our
 I Care Buttons And
 our Mams are coming
 today And they are
 coming right after
 recess And we get to
 show every thing in the class
 to them And we are
 using my Posters cuz
 they came in handy
 the end

translation:

Education Week March 7
 Education Week is a
 special week cause you do
 lots of things. In
 kindergarten we had to
 bring dolls from other
 lands and in grade one
 we made posters of
 polluting and not polluting
 and we say I care
 cause we are wearing our
 I Care buttons and our
 moms are coming
 today and they are
 coming right after
 recess and we get to
 show everything in the class
 to them and we are
 using my posters cause
 they came in handy.
 The End.

Figure 38

Writing Episode 5 of Paula
 March 7, 1985

the leprecaun

Once a long a

time there was

leprecaun He was

a jolly leprecaun

He liked to help And

one Day He was helping

Robert M. M. M. M.

a funny thing
happend lots
of lites came
on And bells began
to ring And soon
the bells stopped And
horns began And then

it began to get
drke And the
moon And stars came
out And the leprecauns
got Sleepy And one
By one they fell

asleep and
anyway they
worked hard

translation:

The Leprecaun

Once upon a

time there was a

leprecaun. He was

a jolly leprecaun.

He liked to help and
one day he was helping.

A funny thing
happened. Lots

of lights came

on and bells began

to ring. And soon

the bells stopped and

horns began and then

all was quiet and

it began to get

dark and the

moon an stars came

out and the leprecauns

got sleepy and one

by one they fell

asleep and

anyway they

worked hard

they and
anyway they
worked hard
all Day long that
they should be Sleepy
too--nd

all day long that
they should be sleepy.
The End.

Figure 39

Writing Episode 6 of Paula
March 15, 1985

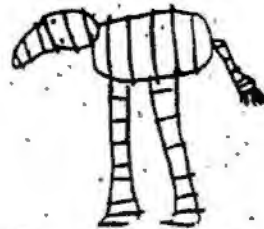
A writing episode produced at the end of this study showed that Paula's knowledge of the written language, with great support from her teacher, has continued to expand during the winter and spring. Her message on April 17, 1985, had become much easier to read, with spelling more closely approximating conventional spelling exceeding the standard of the class (see Figure 40).

once Upon a time
there was an elephant
who liked to laugh
he laughed when a
Person or Some Animal
told him a joke or
he laughed when he

translation:

Once upon a time
there was an elephant
who liked to laugh.
He laughed when a
person or some animal
told him a joke and
he laughed when he

~~dist. What'ded fo~~
~~Some times he told~~
~~his jokes to a noter~~
~~Porson And when the~~
~~Porson did not know~~
~~the joke the~~
~~elephant told the~~




Porson the Anser
 And then he
 Would laugh And
 Some times he
 told a Anamle
 a joke And most
 of the Anales know

~~The elephants~~
~~told jokes. But some~~
~~times they forgot~~
~~the jokes so the~~
~~elephant told the~~
~~Anamle the joke~~
~~And the Anamle~~
~~And the elephant~~
~~laughed And some~~

just wanted to.
 Sometimes he told
 his jokes to another
 person and when the
 person did not know
 the joke the
 elephant told the
 person the answer
 and then he
 would laugh and
 sometimes he
 told an animal
 a joke and most
 of the animals knew
 the elephant's
 jokes. But sometimes
 they forgot
 the jokes. So the
 elephant told the
 animal the joke
 and the animal
 and the elephant
 laughed and sometimes
 they laughed
 all night and sometimes

times they laughed
all Mat And Some
times all week
And one time
the elephant told


a anamle a joke
And thy laughed
for ever till they
got very old and
died
the end

all week
and one time
the elephant told
an animal a joke
and they laughed
forever until they
got very old and
died.
The End.

Figure 40

Writing Episode 7 of Paula
April 17, 1985

The Range of Writing

A sequential listing of the writings of Paula over the six-month period that she was observed showed the extent and variety of her text. Table 7 summarizes Paula's composing behavior and Table 8 illustrates the range of her writings during the course of the study.

It appeared that during the course of the study Paula exhibited more change in writing ability than did any other participant. Paula wrote stories of greater length as the study progressed. Overt language that was evident at the beginning of the study decreased so that sound effects during composing were minimal.

Table 7
Writing Episode Summary -- Paula

| Episode number | Word length | Composing time (minutes) | Resource use | Proofreading during writing | Proofreading after writing | Drawing during writing | Overtness of accompanying language | Pupil interaction solicited | Pupil interaction unsolicited | Teacher participation | Rereading during writing | Date of writing | Topic Area |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | 38 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | F | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | October 18, 1984 | Report on Trip to see Fred Penner |
| 2 | 19 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | November 22, 1984 | Kittens |
| 3 | 20 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | December 5, 1984 | What you want for Christmas |
| 4 | 24 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | December 13, 1984 | Report on Trip to St. Luke's Home |
| 5 | 16 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | January 23, 1985 | A Scary Story |
| 6 | 31 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | January 31, 1985 | My Puppet |
| 7 | 95 | 45 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | S | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | February 25, 1985 | Giraffes |

Key for Overtness of Language:

- OV - Language outloud
- WH - Whispers
- F - Forms words
- S - No evidence of overtness of any kind

Table 8

Summary of Other Writing Episodes - Paula

| Date of Writing | Topic Area | Word Length |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| October 17, 1984 | My Pet | 24 |
| October , 1984 | Call The Doctor | 33 |
| October 24, 1984 | A Fairy Tale | 22 |
| October 25, 1984 | Unassigned Topic - Our School | 22 |
| October 30, 1984 | Halloween | 25 |
| October , 1984 | Fall | 14 |
| October 31, 1984 | Monsters | 10 |
| November 1, 1984 | Our Halloween Party | 25 |
| November 15, 1984 | Unassigned Topic - any imaginary character - Kittens | 23 |
| November 21, 1984 | Birds | 30 |
| November 28, 1984 | Kittens Playing | 26 |
| December 6, 1984 | A Bear Story | 22 |
| December 12, 1984 | Baby Jesus | 29 |
| January 10, 1985 | Snowballs | 17 |
| January 11, 1985 | A Surprise Party | 34 |
| January 17, 1985 | The Magic Mitten | 39 |
| January 24, 1985 | Pablo | 22 |
| January 30, 1985 | Jenny's in the Hospital | 28 |
| February 6, 1985 | Valentine's Day | 58 |
| February 7, 1985 | Friends | 118 |
| February , 1985 | The Meaning of Valentine's Day | 56 |
| February 20, 1985 | Pancake Day | 84 |
| February 28, 1985 | Lions, Tigers and Leopards | 98 |
| March 7, 1985 | Education Week | 88 |
| March , 1985 | The Two Brother Leprecauns | 127 |
| March , 1985 | Funny Things That Happened to ME | 86 |
| March , 1985 | The Leprecaun | 93 |
| March , 1985 | Tigers | 188 |
| March 26, 1985 | The Farm | 304 |
| April , 1985 | When I Grow Up | 63 |
| April , 1985 | Why We Have Easter | 324 |
| April 17, 1985 | Once Upon a Time | 151 |
| | Bumpity the Sad Little Car | 672 |

When Paula's first writing episode was compared with her final writing episode, the elaboration of her written language was extensive as she gained control of her message. Over the six-month period Paula grew in her ability to develop in her awareness of the function of written language in alternate settings.

Writing for Different Purposes

"To develop as writers, children need to write." This statement has been repeated constantly by educators involved in the study of children's writing. Paula showed evidence that her writing was meaningful. Sharing meaning seemed to be the focus of her writing. It appeared that she shared her meaning with others by writing for real purposes.

An interview conducted at Paula's home revealed that Paula saw that writing has real purpose for everyone. For example, when her father went on a business trip she put the following letter in his suitcase (see Figure 41).

Dear Daddy
I hope you have
a good time
on your next
trip. You can
do this hidden
picture while
you are away

Love
Paula

translation:

Dear Daddy:
I hope you have
a good time
on your next
trip. You can
do this hidden
picture while
you are away.
Love Paula

guess what's
here?

Do you know?
I do

(Page Two)
Guess what's
here?

Do you know?
I do

Figure 41

Example of a Letter from Paula

She constantly left notes for her parents around the house.
Among them is an example found in Figure 42.

To Dad I love
you But I
Don't like your
Songs from Gess
who

translation:
To Dad: I love
you. But I
don't like your
songs. From guess
who?

Figure 42

Example of a Note from Paula

Sometimes Paula expected a written reply as in Figure
43. However, on this particular occasion she wanted her

father to reply with the response 'yes' or 'no'. When he tried to explain his answer she blanked it out and said, "You were only suppose to answer 'yes' or 'no'." And sometimes Paula appeared to feel a responsibility or a desire to teach or share her writing ability with her sister and brother. It became clear that Paula had some awareness of the function of written language when she began using her brother and sister as an audience and began varying the content. She came to differentiate the audience she wrote for: parents, teacher, sister and brother and herself.

Do you knoe who
St. Poteck was? ~~_____~~
Do you knoe what he
did? yes And what is
his fruite color is? red
Do you knoe what he
eats? yes

translation:

Do you know who
St. Patrick was? _____
Do you know what he
did? Yes. And what is
his favourite color? Yes
Do you know what he
eats? Yes

Figure 43

A Written Reply from Paula

She wrote letters, asked questions that needed to be answered immediately, constructed lists, recorded important events in her life in her diary and continued to explore with print.

Her sense of audience and style as well as her purposes began to change over a period of time. An example of her writing at home using her brother and sister as the audience is included in Appendix E.

Paula further experimented with language at home by writing a journal. When comparing her journal at home to that written at school, it appeared that at home her style was more of a recording of events like a calendar. She seemed to be influenced by the theme approach used in school when organizing her journal at home. Each page of her journal at home had a heading such as Streets, Homes, Places. Both home and school journals were reflective of ideas and thoughts she wished to convey to an audience. However, it seems her particular mode of self-expression was captured in her journal writing.

Summary

Paula as a six-year-old writer developed a variety of forms and wrote for real purposes. Over the course of the study she displayed that writing has a real purpose for her. She clearly wanted to write and seemed proud to share her meaning with a variety of audiences. With the continued support of her understanding teacher she was successful in developing her own voice.

From the beginning of the study Paula enjoyed experimenting with language and invented spellings. Her complexity of

written units increased from three communication units to sixteen different units at the end of the study. From February to the end of the study Paula's writing showed a gradual increase in the amount of description. Her writing showed the use of a more formal beginning, gave setting information, used action and a final event. Her writing demonstrated that Paula had become sensitive to the elements of story and story language. For example, during a writing episode dated March 7, 1985, Paula used the phrases "and then all was quiet" and "one by one they fell."

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study was undertaken to present a comprehensive description of the writing behaviors of a selected group of six-year-old children and to present a detailed analysis of the wide range of these children's writing attempts. The major questions forming the purposes and dimensions of the investigation were:

1. What do children actually do when they write?
2. How do children write before they have much exposure to reading and have been taught formal spelling?
3. Does growth in children's writing follow a predictable sequence?
4. Can definite stages of development be identified in children's writing?
5. What can one learn from studying the writing process of young children?

Conclusions are based upon the findings reported in Chapter IV concerning the selected group of six year old children.

It appeared from observing the selected six children that the children displayed various levels of ability in written expression. A comparison of the results of Clay's (1979) Concept About Print Test and Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale revealed that Lori Ann and Jerome were at the lowest level of writing development and below

the average stanine of 5. They used numerous word trials, rereadings, voiced overt language and had a slow writing rate. David and Paula, who scored above the average stanine of 5, wrote rapidly without accompaniment of overt language, reflecting a high developmental profile according to Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale. Kimberly's writing behavior indicated evidence of a moderately developed prewriting idea structure. A decrease in rereading suggested an average level of writing development according to Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale. Blair's recorded writing behavior showed a substantial improvement at the word unit level and less evidence of accompanying overt language. Even though Blair belonged to the group of children who represented the average group (stanine score of 5) on Clay's (1979) Concept About Print Test, his writing episodes indicated that he was consistent with a high developmental level according to Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale.

Data on the writing process, obtained through the recordings of the writing behaviors of the selected group of six-year-old children, revealed that the length of the writing attempts was shorter (5-13 words) for children at a lower level on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale. The children who placed high on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale wrote between 55-87 words. For example, David's and Paula's number of written communication units increased from exactly 3 to an average of 15 at the conclusion of the

study. There was also an increase in their average number of words per written communication unit. It went from 4.33 at the beginning to 5.88 at the end of the study for David and from 8.33 to 8.99 for Paula. Lori Ann, who was at the low level of development on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale, advanced from 1 to 5 written communication units. Jerome's number of written communication units remained constant at 1. Their average number of words per communication unit increased from 5.00 to 11.00 for Jerome and 6.00 to 11.60 for Lori Ann. Over the period of the study the children from the lower developmental group (Jerome and Lori Ann), as indicated by Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale, did not show as much of an increase in the number of communication units as did the developmental high group (Paula and David). An analysis of Blair's and Kimberly's average number of words per communication unit increased from 4.50 to 9.41 (Blair) and 8.00 to 9.50 (Kimberly). However, analysis of the number of communication units revealed that Blair's increased from 2 to 17 while Kimberly's increased from 1 to 4.

Observation of the writing process of the selected group of six-year-old children revealed that at their level of writing ability there was no evidence of proofreading during or after the composing phase. Graves found in his study of the writing process of second grade children in 1973 that proofreading was common at that level. Resources

were not used extensively by the six-year-old children, although there was periodic use of charts, their own word dictionaries and basal readers. All six children showed variability in the usages of overt language during the writing episodes. Children from the lower end of Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale needed to hear words outloud, whispered to themselves, formed letters and words and murmured during the composing phase. Rereadings were characteristic of children classified as low on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale. It seemed that drawing was important to help some of the children, who were low on Graves' (1973) Developmental Writing Scale, maintain their flow of ideas. Reading their stories to the class after they had completed their writing was important to all six children throughout the study. Therefore, children's reliance on overt oral language is a crucial link in their progression to written language communication.

The main conclusion drawn from the classroom interviews was that children wrote for unique reasons and viewed their writing in ways that were significant for each of them. Their main concern was knowing a lot of words and being able to think and organize their thoughts in order to write good stories. Nine of the twenty-seven, six-year-old children presented a specific purpose for writing. Four of the children said they wrote stories for an audience. At the conclusion of the study it appeared that six year old children

seemed to write for their own sake, thinking egocentrically when engaged in the writing process.

By contrast, conclusions drawn from the case study of Paula show that she became aware of a sense of audience over the course of the study. She developed in her awareness of the function of written language in alternate settings. She also varied the content of her writing as she differentiated the audience for whom she wrote. As the study progressed, the use of overt language became less important to Paula. As the length of her stories increased, she became sensitive to the elements of story and story structure. As her invented spelling developed, she became conscious of a variety of written language conventions such as the use of subordinate clauses, conjunctions, the possessive, a variety of verbs and pronoun references. Paula's proficient use of invented spelling allowed her to encode meaning fluently. This was also in contrast to most of the other children who struggled to express their thoughts because they had to spend excess time developing their skills to deal with the conventions of print.

Another important conclusion drawn from the recorded writing behaviors of the six children involved in the present study is that these six-year-old children developed a concept of writing and early spelling strategies before receiving much formal instruction. Productive written language learning

occurred when the children were allowed to take risks and to experiment with written language.

Because of individual differences in the selected group of six-year-old children, the researcher is inclined to agree with Clay (1982) in saying that young writers appear to move by various means across several strands of language learning. Sometimes the writing process is interrupted and an entire new pattern may emerge. There may not be any fixed sequence of learning which all children must pass in early writing. In the present study Paula and David used well-developed writing and spelling abilities. Blair and Kimberly experimented with sounds, letters and letter combinations. Lori Ann and Jerome, who seemed limited in their expressive ability at the beginning of the study, acquired a conscious knowledge of sound-symbol relationships as they learned to develop control over the writing process.

Educational Implications

Recorded behaviors of the selected group of six-year-old children in this study suggest:

1. Children need to be provided with an environment which encourages the experimentation of print. Teachers and other adults may offer encouragement of children's print experimentations by accepting efforts without criticism or correction, enjoying

their attempts and asking for explanations of the child's written products.

2. The physical environment of home and school can be easily adapted to provide the atmosphere for print production. Free access to a wide selection of writing materials should be provided for the children. Teachers need to be aware that even giving very young children one sheet of paper may affect the length of the story they will write.
3. Development of a positive writing environment continues by allowing the primary consideration to be the meaning of the message while relegating mechanics and writing skills to secondary emphasis. The child who presents a parent or teacher with a message utilizing invented spelling is attempting to convey a meaningful communication. The reader should concentrate on the meaning of the children's message and not their presentation of conventional spelling.
4. Further encouragement of children's natural interest in print allows them to learn functional uses of writing. Letter writing and grocery lists, for example, would involve children in the functional use of language learning. The letters, notes and lists of children might include examples

of invented spelling. These productions should be accepted in that form.

5. The education of young children should provide for environments that require a diverse number of writing activities in the primary grades. The time devoted to drills and mechanics may be better utilized by encouraging children to learn about print in their own effective way. The beginning child should be allowed natural experimentation with sounds and symbols. Although further research is needed, children's spelling should be accepted in its present stage of development.
6. Writing should be presented as a natural language activity. Writing opportunities presented in a non-threatening atmosphere help children learn to perfect their writing and spelling abilities.
7. Our educational system appears to value early reading at the expense of early writing. Development of writing abilities is often delayed until reading is mastered. Both of these language arts can help to reinforce each other. Children appear to simultaneously write and perceive soundsymbol relationships involved in reading.
8. Data collected in this investigation imply that children possess a wide range of abilities and

knowledge in language learning. In the early stages drawing and talk are very important to the developing writing process. Some children need frequent rereadings in order to keep their thoughts organized and remember what they are writing about. More effective teaching will result when teachers are cognizant of this phenomenon. Therefore, teachers need to understand about language development in very young children.

9. There is every reason to suspect that children in kindergarten would be excellent subjects for a program of reading instruction which incorporated instruction in writing at the same time. In this way the children can begin viewing writing not as something alien imposed upon them. In the present study, at the end of the investigation written communication was something the children could deal with. The printed page was theirs, very familiar and not alien.

Research Implications

Some of the implications for research are discussed below.

1. The present investigation suggests the need for further research in the area of early writing and reading behavior with large groups of children.

2. A need exists to investigate the prevalence of writing in kindergarten children as well as pre-kindergarten. An understanding of these processes through which very young children progress will assist their educators.
3. More studies are needed in which researchers come in direct contact with children and teachers. Direct contact with and extended observation of children are necessary in order to develop sound conclusions relating to the developmental process. Therefore, further studies are needed using the case study method which leads to an understanding of the individual child.

The process of learning to write, like many of the developmental processes, is a far more complicated endeavour than many teachers realize. The researcher believes that this investigation has shed some light on the writing process of young children.

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APPENDIX A

The Writing Process Categories

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The Writing Process Categories

Writing Purposes

1. To write (i.e., no clearly identifiable purpose exists beyond this, e.g., "I'm gonna' do it how my Mama does it.")
2. To create a message (i.e., the meaning of the message is unknown to the child, e.g., "What does this say?")
3. To produce or to practice conventional symbols (e.g., the ABC's, displayed written language) with concern for a referent
4. To detail or accurately represent a drawn object (e.g., the S on Superman's shirt)
5. To label objects or people drawn or located in the environment
6. To make a particular type of written object (e.g., a book, a list, a letter) without concern for a message
7. To organize and record information (e.g., to write a list of friends)
8. To investigate the relationship between oral and written language without concern for a particular referent
9. To express directly feelings or experiences of oneself or others (i.e., direct quotations, as in writing the talk of a drawn character), and
10. To communicate a particular message to a particular audience

Writing Process Components

Message Formulation (Formulation of actual message to be written)

1. Level of specificity

- (a) the topic of the message is specified (e.g., "It's about my puppy.")

- (b) the actual wording of the message is specified (e.g., "This is gonna say, 'My puppy eats too much.'")

2. Level of coherence

- (a) no apparent relationship exists between the message and graphics previously drawn or written on the page (e.g., a list of unrelated words)
- (b) message is related in some identifiable, thematic way to other (but not all) graphics on the page
- (c) entire product (including written and/or drawn graphics) produces a coherent whole

3. Level of linguistic organization (adapted from Clay, 1975)

- (a) word
- (b) any two- or three-word phrase
- (c) any simple sentence consisting of 3 or more words
- (d) a group of 2 or more sentences

Message Encoding

1. Segmented oral message

- (a) not applicable (i.e., one word message[s] not segmented into smaller units)
- (b) no segmenting exists
- (c) message is segmented into phrases, words, syllables, or sounds (i.e., a deliberate pause of 1 second or more exists between units)

2. Systematized procedures for encoding segments (i.e., procedures for independently selecting particular letters to represent particular oral language segments)

- (a) no orthographic systematizing exists; child may (i) use cursive-like script, (ii) select, in an apparently random fashion, letters or letter-like forms (from the child's pool of known forms) to be written, (iii) request entire message be encoded by another; child then copies message
- (b) some systematic, orthographic procedure or combination of procedures are used; child may^a (i) rearrange a fixed subset of the alphabet (e.g., child's name), (ii) use a personal (unconventional) syllable-based strategy (i.e., writing a certain number of letters per syllable), (iii) use a letter-name strategy, (iv) use personal or conventional system of sound/symbol correspondences, (v) request

spelling of a segment from another,^b (vi) base spelling on visual recall, (vii) consult a reference (e.g., a word list)

- (c) a combination of systematic and nonsystematic procedures

Mechanical Formation

1. Conventionality of symbols

- (a) cursive-like script
- (b) letter-like forms
- (c) intermingling of letters and letter-like forms
- (d) letters

2. Discreteness of symbols

- (a) connected symbols
- (b) unconnected symbols
- (c) mixed

3. Ease and efficiency of production

- (a) each stroke is slowly drawn
- (b) some strokes are slowly drawn
- (c) letters or letter-like forms are fluently produced

4. Spatial arrangement (adapted from Clay, 1975)

- (a) no evidence of conventional directional pattern
- (b) part of the conventional directional pattern is in evidence; either "start top left," or "move left to right," or "return down left"
- (c) reversal of the conventional directional pattern (right to left and/or return down right)
- (d) conventional directional pattern
- (e) conventional directional pattern and spaces between words
- (f) extensive text without any unconventionalities of arrangement and spacing of text

Message Decoding

1. Segmented written message

- (a) not applicable (i.e., one word message not segmented into smaller units)
- (b) no segmenting exists
- (c) the written text is segmented (i.e., particular portions of the text are focused on to be decoded into particular oral phrases, words, syllables, or sounds)

2. Systematized procedures for decoding segments

- (a) no systematic orthographic procedure is used for decoding text; child may (i) engage in apparent fantasy behavior, (ii) request entire message be decoded by another
- (b) some systematic orthographic procedure or combination of procedures are used; child may (i) request decoding of text segment from another, (ii) use situational context as the basis for decoding, (iii) use a syllable-based decoding system (i.e., matching a number of oral syllables to the perceived number of segments in text), (iv) use a letter-name strategy (i.e., decode a word containing that letter name), (v) use a personal or conventional system of sound/symbol correspondences, (vi) base decoding on visual recall of (a similar) word

Forms of the Written Product

- 1. A graphic product or a section of a graphic product (drawing and writing intermingled on a page)
- 2. A label or caption for a drawing (writing located in close proximity to the referents)
- 3. A list (single words arranged vertically)
- 4. The alphabet
- 5. A card (small paper attached to a present or an envelope, containing addressee's name)
- 6. A letter (a product which included the names of the addressee and the sender)
- 7. An envelope (a paper folded around a letter which included, at the least, the name of the addressee)
- 8. A book (a multipaged product containing writing)

a No developmental order is implied here.

b A message must contain more than one word before the distinction between requesting as a systematic and as a nonsystematic procedure becomes meaningful.

(Dyson, 1983, pp. 25-26)

APPENDIX B

Samples of Communication Unit Analysis

APPENDIX B

Samples of Communication Unit Analysis

For each of the six students a sample of writing done at the beginning of and at the end of Phase Two is shown. Analysis included computing the number of words in each communication unit, totalling the communication units and finding the average number of words per communication unit by dividing the number of words by the number of communication units.

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two -- November 1, 1984 - David

Transcript:

| | |
|----------|---|
| 5 | /I went trick or treating./ |
| 3 | |
| 5 | /I was skelton.//I had lots of fun./ |
| <u>3</u> | units Total = 13 words |

Average: 4.33

Communication Units

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - David

Transcript:

The Sad Princess

| | |
|----|----------------------------|
| 8 | /Once upon a time there |
| | was a castle//and in |
| 8 | that castle there was |
| | a king/ (and he had a |
| 5 | princess and she was |
| 10 | always sad) /she cried and |
| 7 | cried day and night./ |
| 3 | /She wouldent stop//she |

5 went on and on//and
10 one day the king had
 an annoucement to make/.
17 /the annoucement said
 someone in the kingdom
 must stop her from crying
 forever said the king angrily./
9 /they tried and tried but nothing
 could be done//years passed/
24 then one day a handsome young
 prince came rideing through
 the forest and stoped at
 the castle that day
 and found the princess
11 crying//he loved her so
 much he bent down
 and kissed her/and
11 she stoped crying./She went
 down stairs and showed
 everyone what the prince
14 did/ (and the very very next
 day they got married and
 lived haplly every after.)
16 units Total = 94 words

Average: 5.88

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two - November 1, 1984 - Paula

Transcript:

5 /I had Las of fun//ms
14 Borden And I got 20
 Bags of CpS And 2
6 Bags of CS//And I
 sd trick or treat./
3 units Total: 25 words

Average: 8.33

Communication Units

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - Paula

Transcript:

12 /Once upon a time

there was an elephant
who liked to laugh/
12 /he laughed waen a
proson or some Anamel
8 told him a joke//or
he laughed waen he
jist whated to/
9 /sometimes he told
his jokes to a noter
16 porson//And wean the
porson Did Not Kneoe
the joke the
elephant told the
porson the Anser/
5 /And then he
would laugh//And
9 some times he
told a Anamle
9 a joke//And most
of the Anaes Knoe
the elaphants
7 Jokes//But some -
times they forgot
8 the jokes//so the
elaphant told the
Anamle the joke/
7 /And the Anamle
And the elaphant
6 laughed//And some -
times they laughed
5 all niat//And some -
times all week/
24 /And one time
the elaphant told
a anamle a joke
And thy laughed
for ever tall they
got vary old and
Died
the - end/

14 units

Total = 137 words

Average: 8.99

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two - November 1, 1984 - Blair

Transcript:

4 /I likt the prde/
5 /I likt the Drks
two./

2 units

Total = 9 words

Average: 4.50

Communication Units

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - Blair

Transcripts:

Once upon a time I met a
tall giraffe

13 /once upon a time wan i want
13 aot sid i mat a giraffe//it
wanted smting to et bot i
dedent no wyt to gv fem/
5 /so i gav hem papkorn//and i
gav hem pap chor i amos gv
12 ham avre teing//all we had
9 laft wyis a can ov tonafeh/
9 /we had too go aot and boe
8 awr saf//the naks teing
we bot wyis som kretsi/
4 /hat tum tan//We had som
5 ov tam//the giraffe want
10 bak too the zoo wer he blah/
6 /i dednt wynt too et tam/
10 /wh the giraf aot sid wyis
21 eten the brachis//i gat so
mad tat i jpt in too
may bots and slpt in too
my jakit and wnt aot sid/
13 /wan i did go aot sid i so all
9 ov the brachis//i sall the noo
zoo a kralls the sret/
8 /ndo i know wr the giraffe
5 kam frm//and w lud hple afdr/
17 units Total = 160 words

Average: 9.41

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two - November 1, 1984 - Kimberly

Transcript:

8 /I lik all of My
treat I Hd./
1 unit Total = 8 words
Average: 8.00

T Units:

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - Kimberly

Transcript:

8 /Once upon a time
a bunny got lost/
13 /I said to the lost
bunny do you wat
me to halp you/
9 lett1 lost bunny I wot
nedt lost fo halp/
8 /I like helping a lost
bunny The End/
4 units Total = 38 words
Average: 9.50

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two - November 1, 1984 - Jerome

Transcript:

5 /I wnt Too n house/
(I went to a house).
1 unit Total = 5 words
Average: 5.00

T Units

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - Jerome

Transcript:

11 /Once upon a time I.
met a fox that gos howl/
1 unit Total = 11 words

Average: 11.00

Communication Units

Beginning of Phase Two - November 1, 1984 - Lori Ann

Transcript:

6 Halloween
/I Lik Halloween tric
kor treat./
1 unit Total = 6 words

Average: 6.00

T Units

End of Phase Two - April 17, 1985 - Lori Ann

Transcript:

8 /Once upon a time a bunny
16 got lost//the roBt haD anb
hatD Bekik hes mom mot
sapep and laf hm in the co/
10 /so he kib and kib Bekis he las
9 hes mom//intl a ples cam am
15 see he mit//yor mom nom
hr ran is te ni mas tea
cim to the toe Deprmt/
5 units Total = 58 words

Average: 11.60

APPENDIX C

Blair's Writing Episode

The Lost Bear

March 14, 1985

APPENDIX C

Blair's Writing Episode

The Lost Bear

Translation:

Once upon a time there
was a bear. It wasn't a Big
Bear it was a little bear
One day when no one was looking
the little Bear went into the
woods and got lost that night
they looked everywhere the next
morning the sun came out and
melted the snow when the snow was
all melted the little Bear found
his way back to the village every
one was so happy little Bear never
did that again
The next morning it was little
Bears Birthday after little Bears
Birthday was over little Bear
was big enough to go to school
he learned math and printing every
day he learned different stuff one day
when he came home from school
no one was home
they were gone to the supermarket
when they came back from the
supermarket in the car they had
a lot of food that night they had
something to eat the next morning they
decided to go to the beach when
they got to the beach they parked their
car in the parking lot then
they got a spot at the beach
When they finished swimming they had
something to eat and then they went
home when they got home it was
dark that night little bear had a
dream about his mom because
he wanted to quit school and go
to a different place he told
his mom can he go.
his mom decided can he
go she said you can go
to a different place he

packed his stuff in a suitcase when he got to the place he found a place to stay they showed him to his bed room When he got to his bedroom he unpacked his clothes and put it in the drawers than he went out of the bed room then he had something to eat and went outside and played when he came in he was tired then he went to his bed room and had a nap when he wok up he wanted to go back to the village. Then he packed his suitcase and snucked out the back door and ran back to the train right then he got to the station then he got in to the train and rode back to the village. When he got back to the village he got out of the train and went in to the house when he went in to the house every one was happy then he un packed his suitcase and put his clothes in his drawers and put on his clothes and went out side and than he went to his friends house when he got to his friends house he asked are they comming out. the he and his friends went some where to play when they found a place to play they had a problem they couldn't think of a game to play th thought and thought and thought they still couldn't thik of a game to play. then a person thought of a game to play it was called frozen tag every one thought it was a good game then they started to play. One of the Bears tripped in a branch and another banged.

in to a tree and the last Bear bumped in to the Bear that bumped in to the tree will they couldn't play that game so they thought of another game to play another Bear thought of a nother game to play it was called hiding go seek they tried that game one of the Bears went in the snow and fell right through. another Brear tripped up in a Branch and his claw got stuck in a trap and the last Bear when he went after the Bears he always tripped up in a Branch they couldn't play that game so they thought of a nother game to play and the last Bear thought of a game to play it was called house so they tried that game the biggest was the father and the middlesize one was the mother and the littlest was the little boy their house was the woods the little Bears bike was a piece of a board well almost a bike then he tried to ride of on his bike he tried and he tried and he tried finally he fell over and bumped his head than the father smoked a cigarette and coughed and choked then the mother tried to get a vacuum cleaner and clean the ground when she found a vacuum cleaner she swept up all of the dirt then they had a clean house nothing was there so they couldn't play that game they played frozen tag and they played hiding go seek

and house, so they couldn't
play anymore games now.
so every one went home
and when they were going
home one of the Bears
tripped up in a branch
and found some treasure
and they lived happily ever
after

March 14

- 154 -

The last Bear
Once a pin a tam tar
was a Bear. et waise a Bog
Bear et was a leti Bear
one day wan ho one was king
the latd Bear wat in to the
wis and gat last theaf nit
ta lxt ovre wer the nakst
mrn the sun kam got and
matd the sno wan the Sno was
all matdad the latd Bear tad
hels wa bak to the vleg ovre
one was so happy latd Bear nav
da ta a gan

the next morning et was lat
Bears Birthday off at lat Bears

Birthday was over lat Bear

was Bag o. not to go to Sol

he had mat and printing over

day he had defret sat one day

Wan he kam hom from Skoll
no Wan was hom

ta War gan to the Soprmrcet
Wan ta Cam bac frm the
Soprmrcet in the car ta had
a lat ov fod tat nit ta had
Sapten to et the nast mnn ta
dsidd to go too the be he War
ta gat to the behe ta prkd ta

Car in the pricing lat tan.
ta gat a Spt at the Bethe
wan ta fanehet. Swming ta ha
Sateing to et and tan ta wa
hom wan ta gat hom it. WIS.
at k tat mit lat bear had a
dream a tat he's mam bkis-

he ~~wat~~ to kwat, solt, and go
 to a dfrnt plac he fod
 he's mam kan he go
 he's mam de sid kan he
 go se sad you kan go
 fo a dfrnt plac he
 put he's st in a sokas 2
 Wan he gat to the plac

he found a place to his
tho sad him to his bed
room. When he got to his
bad room he took
his knife and put it in
the door. Then he went
out of the bad room.

tan he had somthing to
et and want at sid and
plad wan. he kam in he
was tired tan he want
to he is bad rom and had
a nap wan he wok up
he wadd to go bak
to the vlej. Then.

he part heis Sokas, and
Snak at the bak dor
and ran bak to the trahe
rat wan he got to the
Sahing fan he got in
to the traing and tod
bak to the vle h wan he
gut bak to the vle g

he gat of ov the tran
and wat in to the haois
wan he want in to the
haois avre one wais happe
tan he an pakt he is so las
and pakt he is klois in he is
Jrois and put an he is klois

and want aot, sied and tan

he wat to heis frands haas
wan he got to he frands

haasis he aist ar ta komn

aot tan he and he is trnis

want smwar to play wan

fa faond a plac to play

ta had a pramlm ta
Kodingt taingk ior a gam to
play ta tot and tot and
tat to Swl Koding taingk
ior a gam to play tan
or prsing tat or a gam
to play et wks klod

frosing tag avre one
tat et wyis a god gam
tan ta Srtd to play. One
ov the Bears tripped in
a branch and another bar
in to a tree and the
last Bear bomt in to

the Bear tat bamt in
to the tree wat ta kod
play tat gam so ta
tat or a natr game to
play a natr Bear tat or a
natr game to play et
Wysis kb hidinggo sek ta'

trid tat game one ov

The Bears want in the Sno
and fal rat tro a noth

Bear trep- up in a

Branch and he is klall got

Stok in a hrap and

the last Bear wan he

want attr the Bears
he allweis grept up
in a Branch ta Kodd ph
tat game So ta tat

ov a notr game to
play and the last Bear

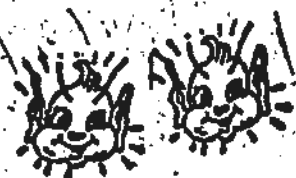
tat play et ov a game to
play et wyls kid house

So ta trid tat game
the begis wyis the fatr
and the medlsid one
was the mother and the
letst wyis the left boy
tar house wyis the wadis
the latl Bearis bak wyis

a pes ov a berd
wal almost a bie k
toin he trid to rid
ov in he is bie k he
trid and he trid and
he trid finle he fol
ovr and bont he is hed

tan the fitr Smokt a
sigret and kaft and
trokt tan the moher
trid too got a raum
klenr and klen the
grand wan she fond
a varum klear she

Swapt up all over the
drt ten ta had a klen
house nateing wyis ter
So ta kodt play tat game
ta playd fro sing tag
and ta playd hied inggo sak
and house So ta kob t.



play any mor, game's nao

So evre one want hom

and wan ta wr going

hom. one ov the Bears

thept up in a brat

and faond sim traist

and ta levd happleⁿ avr
afdr

APPENDIX D

Children's Views About Writing

April 24, 1985

APPENDIX D

Children's Views About Writing

April 24, 1985

Researcher: (a) When you are writing stories, what do you think you need to be able to do in order to write good stories?

(b) Why do you think it is important to write stories?

The responses of the different children are the following:

Paula: (a) 1. Think about it a lot.
2. To write a story you need to be able to write - By writing some words that make up a story.
3. Know something about writing.
4. Think about it a lot and put a lot of words to it.

(b) Ah ...

Jamie: (a) 1. Write good stories.
2. Think what he is going to write.

(b) See how good we can write.

Brad: (a) 1. Lots of words.
2. You can look in your reader. Your reader helps you find words.

(b) 1. You can read them to the teacher and ah, I like writin them and sometimes when I get the words wrong she ah, I tells the teacher and she pute them on the board.

Robert: (a) 1. Know ah - you got to know how to draw stuff.
2. You can use stuff special - like you got to use stuff to write with ... special.

3. You got to ah ... like when your writing you got to know what you are going to write about and stuff.

(b) Ah ...

Angela:

- (a) 1. They got to think ah ...
2. They got to think about what they are going to write and like look in books to see what else they can make up.

(b) Because they are good.

Stephenie:

- (a) 1. To be good printers.
2. To be good writers,
3. Need to concentrate and all that.

(b) ... no response

Renee:

- (a) 1. Write about like ... write about people who are sad and all that.
2. You know about ... like know about what you write.
3. You start your story and then you just draw your picture.
4. Try to sound out your letters when you try to do your words.

(b) So your teacher will like them.

Jerome:

- (a) 1. Do your best work.
2. Any story in your book that you likes.

(b) So we can do good work.

Krista:

- (a) 1. You needs to know the letters.
2. You need to know the words you are writing.

(b) Because then you'll know how to write lots of stories when you grow up.

- Jeffrey:
- (a) 1. To sound out the words.
 - 2. To do a good story. I can't think of anymore. I don't know.
 - (b) So your teacher can hear them and so you can bring your book home and your mom can hear them and dad and your nan and popie.

- Billy:
- (a) 1. I don't know.
 - 2. Think about a story to write first.
 - 3. You need to know the words in the story you are going to write.
 - 4. You need to know a lot of words.
 - (b) What? I can't think of anything.

- Lofi Ann:
- (a) 1. Think of the words.
 - 2. Ask the teacher or ask your friend next to you.
 - 3. Lots of words.
 - (b) To read.

- David C.:
- (a) 1. Words.
 - 2. What to put down.
 - 3. Print.
 - (b) Ah, to learn. So you ... when you get bigger you know what to get in groceries.

- Jacqueline:
- (a) 1. I don't know.
 - 2. How to print. I don't know.
 - (b) I don't know. To learn words.

- Curtis:
- (a) 1. Think a lot and you need lots of concentration too.
 - (b) To learn things, like you learn how to spell words and sound them out.

Andrea: (a) 1. You should be able to sound out the words.
2. You should be able to You shouldn't be able to forget what you are going to write down.

(b) Because so you won't get bored.

Chad: (a) 1. 'I don't know (pause).

(b) To practise.

Kimberly: (a) 1. Be a good writer.
2. Paint ... and sometimes we draw good pictures. I can't think of anything else.

(b) ... no response.

Blair: (a) 1. Got to think.
2. Ah ... this is hard. I said think already.

(b) To learn to write.

Stephen: (a) 1. Words.
2. The letters. I can't think of nothing else.

(b) So you learn words and your letters.

Tina: (a) Try the best you ... that you can do it and try to sound out your words.

(b) We write about all kinds of things. Cause I try my best every day when we write stories.

Heather: (a) 1. Like ... knowing a lot of words.
2. Words? Practise.
3. Sound out words.

(b) I don't know.

Vanessa:

- (a) 1. Words.
2. Practise it. Like practise writing stories.
3. Know how to do good printing.
- (b) You learn about stories ... when you read about them you learn about them.

Christopher:

- (a) 1. To hold his pencil right. I don't know.
2. Pictures. I don't know.
- (b) To help us learn - to help us when we grow up to write and print.

Craig:

- (a) 1. A good title.
2. Think of a good story.
3. Need ... ah ... be able to try to write the words.
4. And remember what you are going to write.
- (b) I don't know.

Michael:

- (a) 1. You have to listen to your brain ... ah ... it tells you (pause) it helps you when you write a story.
- (b) You have to think ... ah ... what story you are going to write (pause) so you learn about ... ah ... so you can learn different things.

David P.:

- (a) 1. Sometimes I got to know words.
2. Think of a good story to write.
- (b) 1. To learn words.
It's fun.

APPENDIX E

Interview with Mrs. H.

April 26, 1985

APPENDIX E

Interview with Mrs. H.

April 26, 1985
12:00 p.m.

Mrs. H.: Since Paula has been born I worked for sixteen months. When she was two and a half years old I went back to work and I worked until just before we had Leslie. She (Paula) didn't mind the first few months that I worked but after that ... my sister (Cindy) looked after her for the first three months I was working. That was the same as me being here. They drew, they colored ... Cindy used to get cardboard and make shapes. Yes, Paula was about two and a half then, a bit younger than Leslie. They made circles, squares and things. She spent all of her time with Paula. I give her credit for that. I wouldn't have the patience now to do the same thing with Leslie Ann. I suppose it was the stage she (Cindy) was at then, seventeen or eighteen, whatever. She didn't mind the dishes in the sink. Paula was played with, that sort of way. After that I took her to Arch's brother's wife who took care of her. She didn't like being taken out.

Researcher: What about before she started kindergarten? Was she interested in watching "Sesame Street"?

Mrs. H.: Oh yes, she watched television all day now if I didn't take her away from it. Yes, she watched "Sesame Street," all the programs, whatever was one.

Researcher: I noticed a lot of books in the bookcase. Did you read to her when she was little?

Mrs. H.: There's more books in the bedroom. Arch's cousin says there's no trouble to know that this house has got children. We had to put more shelves in the closet in the bedroom for books. Yes, she would bring in books - she had one book in particular, Leslie took to the same book when she started wanting

to be read to - Baby Cheerful Tearful that was her favorite book for ages and ages. Actually, some of the books out there belong to myself and Cindy - some that we had when we were growing up. This one, Baby Cheerful Tearful, I think must be Cindy's. We read that. She would come in in the morning (she was never a good sleeper until now) and early in the morning, 6:30 or 7:00, she would say, "Read, open your eyes and read." That's the way it was, she just wanted to be read to. Leslie picked up on the same book when she started wanting to be read to, last year some time.

Researcher: Did she write any stories before she started kindergarten?

Mrs. H.: I got some things I can show you. The YM/YWCA had a program on Saturday afternoons for about two hours. It was arts and crafts type thing. We took Paula down there for a while. She really enjoyed that. I saved the things she brought back. That was the year before she started kindergarten. She was about four or four and a half. She liked to color, she had lots of coloring books. I took out the blackboard too and she would scribble all over the place.

Researcher: I want you to look at some of her writing she did at school and comment on anything you feel is important for my information.

Mrs. H.: (Viewing Paula's writing episode of October 18, 1984)

This is where she saw Fred Penner at the Arts and Culture Center. We've been there lots of times. I take her to see the movies. I think this is eight that she saw since she was three.

Researcher: (Viewing Paula's writing episode of October 17, 1984)

Paula is writing about her pet cat.

Mrs. H.: Yes we had a cat, Smokey. We had to give him away, we carried her out home because she is Siamese or part Siamese and she is

high strung. We couldn't trust her with Leslie or Gregory.

(Viewing Paula's writing episode titled "Call the Doctor")

That sounds like a story book she had. She went to a birthday party and got a prize. I think that's about the book Penny Goes to the Doctor.

(Viewing Paula's writing episode in November concerning Birds). She reads: The mother and father are getting worms for the baby birds so the baby birds won't die and won't get sick and the father is taking care of the babies.

• Researcher:

This one is interesting. Paula divided her page and compared the grizzly bear and the polar bear.

Mrs. H.:

We got some books from Grolier, I Want to Know Books. There are two sections to them. Perhaps that's where she got the idea for that.

(Viewing Paula's writing episode of December 12, 1984, called Baby Jesus)

This one is about Christmas. She had to know all about Christmas, God and the Baby Jesus.

(Viewing Paula's writing episode of December 13, 1984, in which she reported on visiting St. Luke's Home)

This one is where she went to St. Luke's Home. Yes, she thought that was wonderful. One old lady was one hundred and one years old and one of the children said, "You can't be that much, you can only be a hundred."

Paula asks a lot of questions. She asked the other day, "Where does numbers end?" I said, "Oh, but numbers don't end." She said, "But they must end." I said, "They go on and on more than you can imagine." She said, "Even more than a million." I suppose she can't visualize that you could

have that much written down on the page. It's the same thing about age, dying and going to heaven. She wanted to know how you got to heaven. I had to explain that your body doesn't go to heaven, only your soul. She thought that only old people died so I said I suppose we'll have to tell her no, that's not so because someone might die belong to her that is not old. She thinks old is someone who is grannies age - 80 - old is when your that age - old and wrinkly. Anyway she figured out then that you don't have to be old to die. She was only five or five and a half then and Arch's grandmother died and of course she wanted to go. She came home and told me that granny died and now she is going to heaven, her soul is going to heaven. She is going to have white wings. She is going to watch over all of us now and she won't be lonely. There hasn't been any questions about that since. She wants all of her questions answered. You can't say because anymore, that's not good enough.

Researcher:

Here is her journal she did at school.

Mrs. B.:

I remember her reading that before. Her words are not as good here at the beginning of the year but I mean you can see as she goes on that her spelling is improving. (At this point Leslie Ann, Paula's sister, interrupted with a book. She placed the book in front of her mother and said, "Read now." Leslie Ann is told to wait until later).

That one was about in church. Once a month we have family communion and the children are allowed to stay. They must have had pictures on that day. Paula likes to go to Sunday School.

That one was about the CFIC sale we had,

The day she bumped. That one ... "I bumped my head. I had to go to the doctor. The day I bumped it was the day I had to go skating but I never went cause the helmet might have hurt it." She really had a big bump on her head.

That one was March 29. "Well a T.V. crew came to my classroom. We had to write a story because we could write good stories and they filmed us and we had lots of fun." She is too busy writing stories now to write in her journal.

APPENDIX F

Paula's Writing Using Leslie Ann
and Gregory as Audience

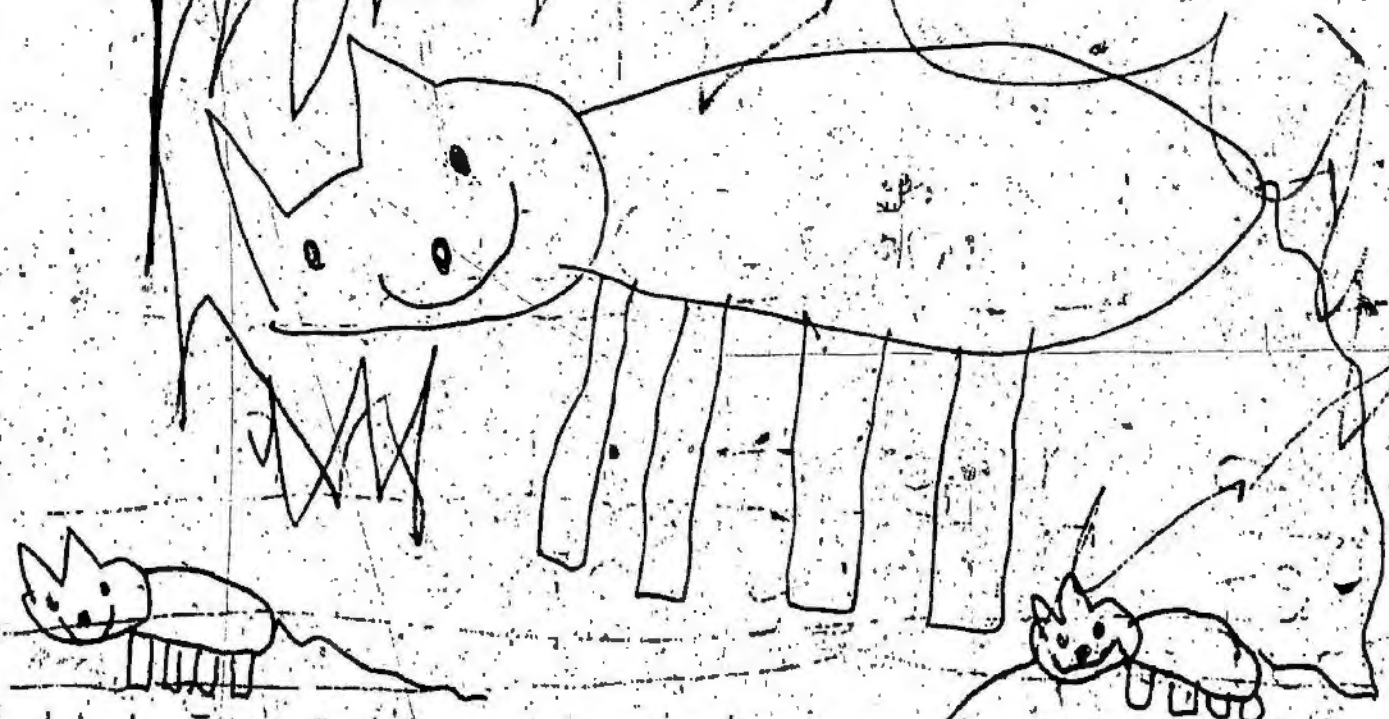
My Program Book

My Pet "Book

Full With Pets

And Full With
Concerts

My Best Book



Paula HVVV✓

Lesley HVVV✓

Gregory HVVV✓

Lisa HxxV✓

Roger HxxV✓

I Love Pets

we are Having a
Pet Parade - on
Sunday

My Pet

- 186 -

I Have a Cat Her
Name is Smokey and

I like Her But She is
around the Bay Because

OF Lesley and Gregory

Because Lesley and

Gregory are to Little

Oct 18 21

1984 13 April 12

1978 13 April 29

1982 13 Nov 29

1983 1976 41 July 24

Dec 13 17

1954 1973 Feb 2

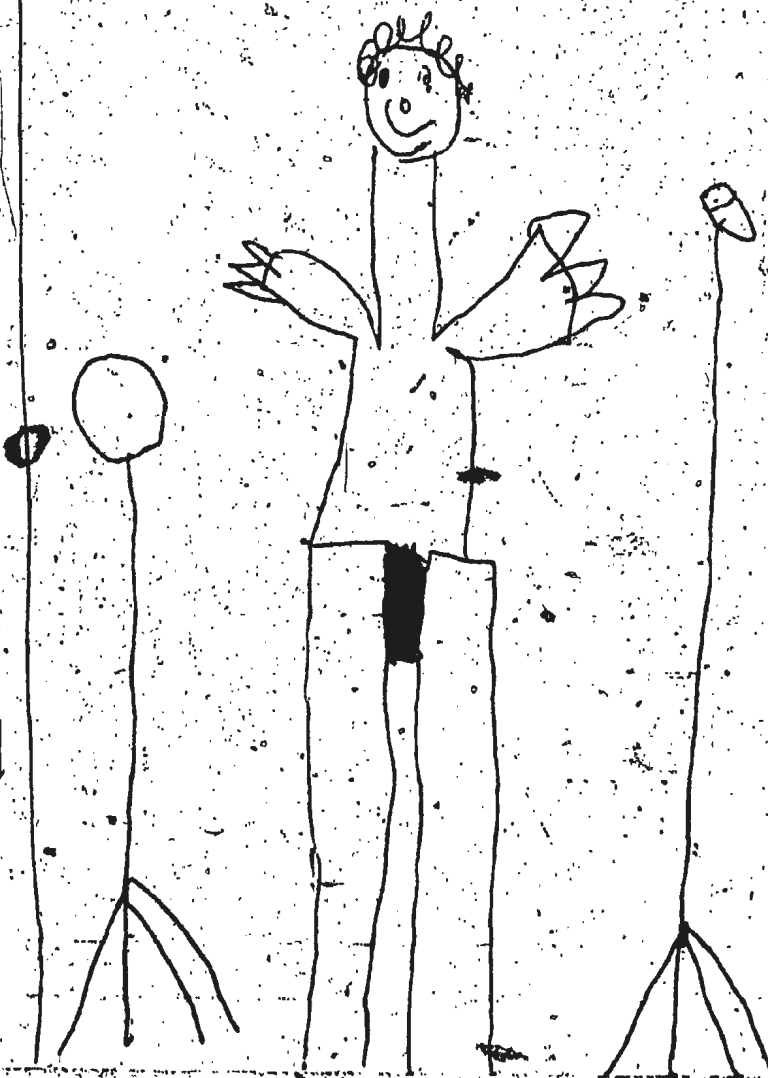
Sept 13 6

1946

And
He
Sang
A
easy
Song
And
it
was
this
Old
Man
He
played
one

I Love the
Show And it
was Great

And
He
Sang
too
easy
Songs
And
they
were
I
had
A
Roast



APPENDIX G

Paula's Journal at School

APPENDIX G

Paula's Journal at School

Translation for Paula's Journal at School

September, 1984

I went to a restaurant
yesterday for a Special
occasion Because it was
a special occasion and it
was My Moms and Dads
anniversary.

September, 1984

I went to McDonald's Last Night
and I loved it
cause it was My Aunts
Birthday and it was
fun and we had a
coke

September, 1984

My name is Paula H.

September, 1984

I like to Skate
and I Go to Skating
At the Skating Arena
this year.

September, 1984

Today the Helpers Are
Robert and Jamie.

September, 1984

September, 1984

Today is
Wednesday the
26 of September
My Name is Paula

October, 1984

Read my reader
for School and I
watched A good show
and I watched it
while I read my
reader

October, 1984

Rose Petal And it
was great And Mommy
Let me stay up
to watch it and
I loved it and it
was All About
that Rose Petal
Drank a Potion and She lived

October, 1984

You should of watched it
cause it was exciting
And it was a
long Show it was
on till 9:00

October, 1984

I went to a Party
on Saturday It was
at McDonalds and I
had fun because

Fall, 1984

I went to Church
on Sunday and We
had to Go Up stairs
cause it was Christening day
and Communion day to and
I saw Pictures to
And it was fun at
Church And We had
to Stay in church

October, 1984

I loved the centers we
did and this is the center
I loved Best the
Pumpkin one and we had
movies in school And We had
two Safety ones and two
fairy tales And we liked
A little fun the Safety
Ones

October, 1984

We had a Halloween
Party in School and
My mommy made cookies
for it and i was
the Helper

November, 1984

I am glad you liked
the cookies And on
Saturday we went
to the CFIC sale and
me and Lesley
Bought a decoration for
the Christmas tree

- 191 -

November, 1984.

I go to Brownies
on Thursday And I
have fun in Brownies
And we sing songs
in Brownies too.

We started Centers
And we had in the
dental hyginist
And I was the center
Leader And we had to
Fill in some Lines

My cousin was out to My
house And we played treasure
boat

November 30, 1984

We did Printing and We are
going to finish centers
today

November 30, 1984

We Did Printing and
We are wearing
Our I Am Special!
Buttons today and
We are writing in
Our Journal this
morning. And we Did
Math

January 22, 1985

I bumped My head and I
had to go to the Doctor
and the Day I bumped it
that Day was the Day I

had to go Skating But I
never went cause the helmet
might of hurt it

I went bowling on Sunday
and First I got the ball in the
gutter And then I had A
strike And I got a trophie
And two big Macs

March 29, 1985

Well A TV Crew
came to my classroom
And we had to write A
story cause they came
Because we could write
good stories And they
filmed us and I had
A lot of fun the -'end

Sept. 1984

I Wte to a Rsd +
Uyosoday for a SSL
ACSH Recsz it wae
a SSL aKGM and It
wae My Mams and Dads
andavsah

I Wte to Mrs LSNT Net
and I lloD it
CSZ it wae My AnnSS
Batday and It wae
fun and we hd a
Colk

My naoe is Paula H

Sept. 1984

Paula, you sure have exciting
times. What do you like to do
best of all? Go to Sacchi

I like to SSGT

And I Go to SSGT+S

At the SSGT+S Rhna
Tiss ynd

today the Helpers Aer
Robert and Jamie

Today is

Wednesday the

26 of September

My Name is Paula

Oct. 1984

Paula, what did you do last night?

Road My Roadr

for Sooh! And I

Wtt A good SWW

and I Wtt it

Will I Road My

Roadr

What Show did you watch?

What was it all about?

RoS Ptt! And ti

Was Gyt And Mommy

It Me Sa Up

To WC ti And

I Ld ti And ti

Was All About

fat Rus Ptt!

Ok A PoS And Se Lt

Oct. 1984

pin I don't see Rose & Peter but
it sure sounds like a great
show. And it was

You sd of Wcd +
CS it was icstn
And it was a
lig show it was
on til 5:00

What did you do this week-end,
Paula Tell me about it.

I went to a party
on Saturday It was
at McDonalds and I
had fun because

Fall, 1984

I went to Church
on Sunday And we
had to go up Stairs
cause it was cidnday
And kmynday to And
I saw Pictures for
And it was fun at
Church And we had
to Sy in Church

You seem as if you really
enjoyed church. I'm sure

Jacqueline's party was fun too.

Oct 14

I Love'd the St's we
did And t.s. is the Str
I Love'd BST the
Pkn one And we hd
Mn's in Shll And we hd
too St ones And too
fret+is And we hd
A ft fm the St
One's

What did you do this weekend?

What did you like best of all
about this week in school?

We had a Halloween
Party in School And
My Mommy Mad Cooc's
for it And i was
the Helper

Nov. 1984

I liked ~ the party too and I
certainly liked your Mommy's
cookies! You were a great helper
and you got to be helper for
two days, didn't you? What did
you do this week-end? Did
I am glad to you like
the cookies And on
Saturday we went to
the CFIC Sale And
me And LESLEY
BUT A dacrAsN for
the ChSims free
You sure had a nice week-end
Paula. What kind of decoration
did you buy? I guess you're
really looking forward to Christmas!

November

I go to Brownies
on Thursday. And I
have fun in Brownies
And we sing songs
in Brownies to

Did you like this week in
school? What did you do?

We started Center's

And we had in the
dental hygienist

And I was the Center

Leader. And we had to

Fill in some lines

Good!! Tell me about

your week-end.

My

COIN was out for My

Horns. And we played twice

I like treasure boat too, Paula.

I bet you and your cousin
had fun.

we did Prnten And we
are gowen to finish Centers
today

We Did Nov 30 Prnten and
we are wearing
our "I Am SPECIAL!"
Bohn's today and
we are Rating in
our journal the
Soning and we Did
Mate

You sure did lots of
exciting things, didn't you? What
did you like about this week?

Jan 22

I ~~later~~ My bed and I
had to go to the Dator
and the Day I bote it
tot Day Was the Day I
had to go Satig But I
Navr what Cas the helmet
put off hurt it

I was really sorry that you
bumped your head and I'm sure
it must have hurt you. You
were really a brave little girl though.

What did you do this week?

I Wnet boeing on Sunday

And FortS I got the ball in the

gott And tene I had A

Sack And I got a forf

And to bra makes

APPENDIX H

Paula's Journal at Home

Home work N. 1985 22

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 4 | 1 | ✓✓ |
| 16 | 2 | ✓✓✓ |
| 15 | 3 | ✓✓✓ |

I had D
to Go
to the
Journal
on Tuesday

2

Streets

1985.22

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Sreets ✓ | I had 1 |
| ate places | to eat |
| ware homes | Sakten on |
| are boat | Tenday |

3

Homework

1985 22

Home's
are places
where we
live

Thao
to go to
Belgium,
on Thursday

4 Places

There
is where
we have
fun

I was to P-F-I

5

| | | | |
|--------|---|---|------------|
| A NAME | V | 7 | I was |
| S d | | | To Toronto |
| 2008 | | | |

| | | | |
|-------|---|------------|---|
| dolls | ✓ | I Go | 0 |
| have | | to Church | |
| names | | on Sundays | |

7

me

- 209 -

Therapy ✓

lots of

mes

1 Lori ✓

2 Lesley ✓

3 Lisa ✓

4 Leo ✓

5 Gregory ✓

6 Gon ✓

7 Roger ✓

8 Portia ✓

9 Renee ✓

10 Paul ✓

11 Elana ✓

12 Heather ✓

13 Arch ✓

14 Aadera ✓

15 Angela ✓

16 Good ✓

17 Herrick ✓

18 Anthony ✓

8 LOVE - 210 -

Love ✓
Comes
o Any Day
f the
week

12345678

91011121314

151617181920

9

hlepung

hlepung

hlepung

hlepung

hlepung

hlepung

Woen

SA was

a bar

She was

little

[illegible]

12

- 214 -
Cale

Care
is Love

13

2/25 215 -

eyes

✓

0123456789

Seeing

here

GOWDS

On duty

head



